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STRIXHAVEN™

A CURRICULUM OF CHAOS

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

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ON THE COVER

Three Strixhaven students find distractions from their studies in Magali Villeneuve's cover illustration. On the back, a harried Biblioplex assistant tries to tidy the mess.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS
STRIXHAVEN
A CURRICULUM OF CHAOS

ON THE ALT-COVER

Hydro74 shows off the Strixhaven star, a symbol of unity and magical fellowship. The sigils of each of Strixhaven's five colleges adorn the back cover.

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DANIEL LJUNGGREN

WELCOME TO STRIXHAVEN

> THE MISSION OF STRIXHAVEN UNIVERSITY IS TO *discover and preserve magical knowledge, to disseminate that knowledge from one generation to the next, to promote free and open study of magic in all its forms, and to enhance the lives of people throughout the world through the use of magic.*
>
> —Strixhaven mission statement

A magical world boasts many places where students can study magic and many sages who take eager learners under their wings. But being accepted to Strixhaven University is a special honor, the dream of many young students. Strixhaven is a place of enlightenment and learning, and both its graduates and its delegates are typically welcomed and respected wherever they go.

Founded seven centuries ago by five ancient dragons, Strixhaven is the premier institution of magical learning, drawing promising young mages from all over. Each equipped with its own campus and faculty, Strixhaven's five colleges—summarized in the Colleges of Strixhaven table—cover a vast array of academic and magical specialties.

As a Strixhaven student, you start with a well-rounded education in a rigorous first-year program. In your second year, you choose your preferred specialty at one of the five colleges. You can also partake in a vibrant campus life, with plenty of clubs and other activities. You might even play on one of Strixhaven's prestigious Mage Tower teams and bask in the adoration of cheering crowds!

COLLEGES OF STRIXHAVEN

College	Description
Lorehold	Explores the past and preserves its lessons for future generations. Also called the College of Archaeomancy.
Prismari	Uses the elements to practice the arts. Also called the College of Elemental Arts.
Quandrix	Focuses on the mathematics of nature. Also called the College of Numeromancy.
Silverquill	Teaches the magic of rhetoric, poetry, oration, and writing. Also called the College of Eloquence.
Witherbloom	Harnesses the forces of life and death. Also called the College of Essence Studies.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This book is your guide to life at Strixhaven in DUNGEONS & DRAGONS—an introduction to the university, a guide to creating student characters there, a campaign, and a collection of friends and foes.

Chapter 1 gives an overview of life and study at Strixhaven. It introduces the main features of the central campus and each of the five colleges.

Chapter 2 is your guide to creating a student character. It introduces the owlin race and five backgrounds—one for each college—as well as a collection of feats, spells, and magic items.

Chapters 3–6 provide a campaign meant to advance characters from 1st to 10th level as they progress through their magical studies. Each chapter covers a year's worth of adventure, so characters begin chapter 3 as 1st-level characters and first-year students and begin chapter 6 at the start of their fourth year of studies (at around 8th level). Chapter 3 includes an overview of the adventures and the overall campaign arc as well as special rules for aspects of campus life: exams, relationships, extracurriculars, and jobs.

Chapter 7 is a collection of stat blocks for students, faculty, and various creatures on and around the Strixhaven campus. Whether student adventurers get caught up in a duel with their rivals or face a dreaded mage hunter, the stat blocks in this chapter give you the information you need to resolve the situation.

ORIENTATION

The following subsections present three important facts to keep in mind as you explore these pages and prepare to play or run the book's campaign.

STRIXHAVEN IS A UNIVERSITY

This book's campaign assumes that the player characters are students at Strixhaven University. Even as they get caught up in the adventures, the characters have to continue going to class, doing homework, and studying for exams. Optional rules in chapter 3 reinforce the importance of study in the adventures.

The characters are also subject to the authority of the university's faculty and staff members. Circumstances will at times cause player characters to defy faculty authority—and even deans—during their adventures, and the threat of detention or even expulsion might hang over their head.

Finally, student characters are part of a school community. They live in university housing, eat in dining halls, and spend the majority of their time on campus. They eat, sleep, study, socialize, and adventure as part of a community of students, faculty, and staff. The school is like a town, where a relatively small cast of characters can play significant roles over the course of the campaign.

IT'S AN ACADEMY OF MAGES

Study at Strixhaven isn't about learning to be a wizard but about learning to be a historian, an artist, an orator, a scientist, or some other profession—while using magic to enhance one's studies. The university's understanding of magic is expansive. Characters of any class can study at Strixhaven, whether they're full-fledged spellcasters like wizards, clerics, and druids; they manage a spell or two thanks to a subclass or feat; or they manifest magical abilities that aren't even spells. (For example, a barbarian who follows the Path of the Ancestral Guardian, described in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*, can excel in studying history at Lorehold College by virtue of their connection to an ancestral spirit.)

Magic is everywhere on campus. The campus culture encourages finding magical solutions to the most mundane problems, and if characters need access to a spell they can't cast, they have a strong chance of finding someone who can cast it.

IT'S COSMOPOLITAN

Strixhaven draws students and faculty from across the world and from other realms in the multiverse. The university's students and faculty are united by a desire to learn and include humans, elves, dwarves, owlin (described in chapter 2), orcs, trolls, vampires, and studious folk of many other origins.

In practical terms, for player characters, you can use the rules found in any D&D book to select a character's race, if the DM approves. For nonplayer characters, you're as likely to meet a pixie, a dryad, a giant, a treant, or another fantastical creature on campus as you are to meet a Humanoid. The faculty members mentioned in chapter 1 include genasi, tritons, and even a bipedal brown bear.

To the faculty and students of Strixhaven, it is unremarkable to meet someone who hails from a faroff land, since almost everyone on campus is from somewhere else. Strixhaven has a place for anyone who is dedicated to magic-enhanced study.

STRIXHAVEN'S WORLD

Strixhaven bills itself as "the premier institution of magical learning in the world," but the question that raises for your campaign is this—which world?

In the multiverse of the MAGIC: THE GATHERING Trading Card Game, Strixhaven is located on a world called Arcavios, which (according to legend) formed from the collision or merging of two other worlds. It is situated in the northeastern portion of a continent called Orrithia, also known as the Vastlands, which is populated by a tremendous variety of peoples.

For the purposes of D&D, though, you can place Strixhaven wherever it best fits the needs of your campaign. It could be in a world of your own creation, in a published D&D setting (such as the Forgotten Realms or Eberron), in the planar cosmopolis of Sigil, or in an interplanar nexus that allows it to draw students from across the Material Plane or the entire multiverse.

Whatever world you decide to place Strixhaven in, three elements of the wider world of Arcavios might have some impact on adventures in the school.

SNARLS AND STAR ARCHES

As described in the *Player's Handbook*, magic suffuses all existence in the worlds of D&D. In the Forgotten Realms, scholars describe the fabric of magic as a Weave that allows spellcasters to interact with the world's underlying magical reality. In Arcavios, that fabric is knotted and tangled in some locations, creating a phenomenon called snarls. At these places, spells can be amplified or distorted in unpredictable ways. This phenomenon matters for Strixhaven because a luminous snarl is situated at the very heart of campus, located in the Hall of Oracles in the university's monumental library, the Biblioplex.

Similarly, gravity-defying arch shapes appear throughout the world of Arcavios and, in particular, tower over the Biblioplex. These star arches are made from spokes of natural materials that float in an arch shape, with a precise inner curve and a rough and irregular outer arch. They can stand straight or lie at an angle, and they can be small or enormous, whole or broken, grown over or mysteriously clean. Their irregular spokes evoke the radiating lines of a shining star.

The star arches are a mystery left over from the birth of the world. In most cases, the arches simply float inexplicably—silent, immovable, and inert. But many people report seeing an arch appear to them at a critical juncture in their lives, helping them understand a lesson or answer a burning question in their mind. Some scholars believe each arch marks a place of great magic, such as the site of a great mage's birth or the location of a time-lost spell. Other folk believe these arches are connected with the archaics in some way (see "Archaics and the Oracle" below). Some students have even seen an arch come to life with magic in an archaic's presence.

Both snarls and star arches are subjects of magical research for students and faculty at Strixhaven, who also study wild and dead magic zones, floating earth motes, and other weird locales.

FOUNDER DRAGONS

Strixhaven University was founded by five ancient dragons who, according to legend, hatched from the magical energy of the newborn world of Arcavios. These Founder Dragons were among the first to master magic, and they realized that only through disciplined study would magic be safe in the hands of other peoples. They founded Strixhaven to facilitate that study and established the five colleges based on the magic that each dragon mastered, as summarized in the Founder Dragons table.

To this day, the Founder Dragons roam the world. They no longer associate directly with Strixhaven, preferring to let the deans of the colleges speak in their stead. The dragons' knowledge is vast, but their tempers can prove short. Mages seek them out only to learn the most elusive secrets. The dragons' stat blocks are presented in chapter 7.

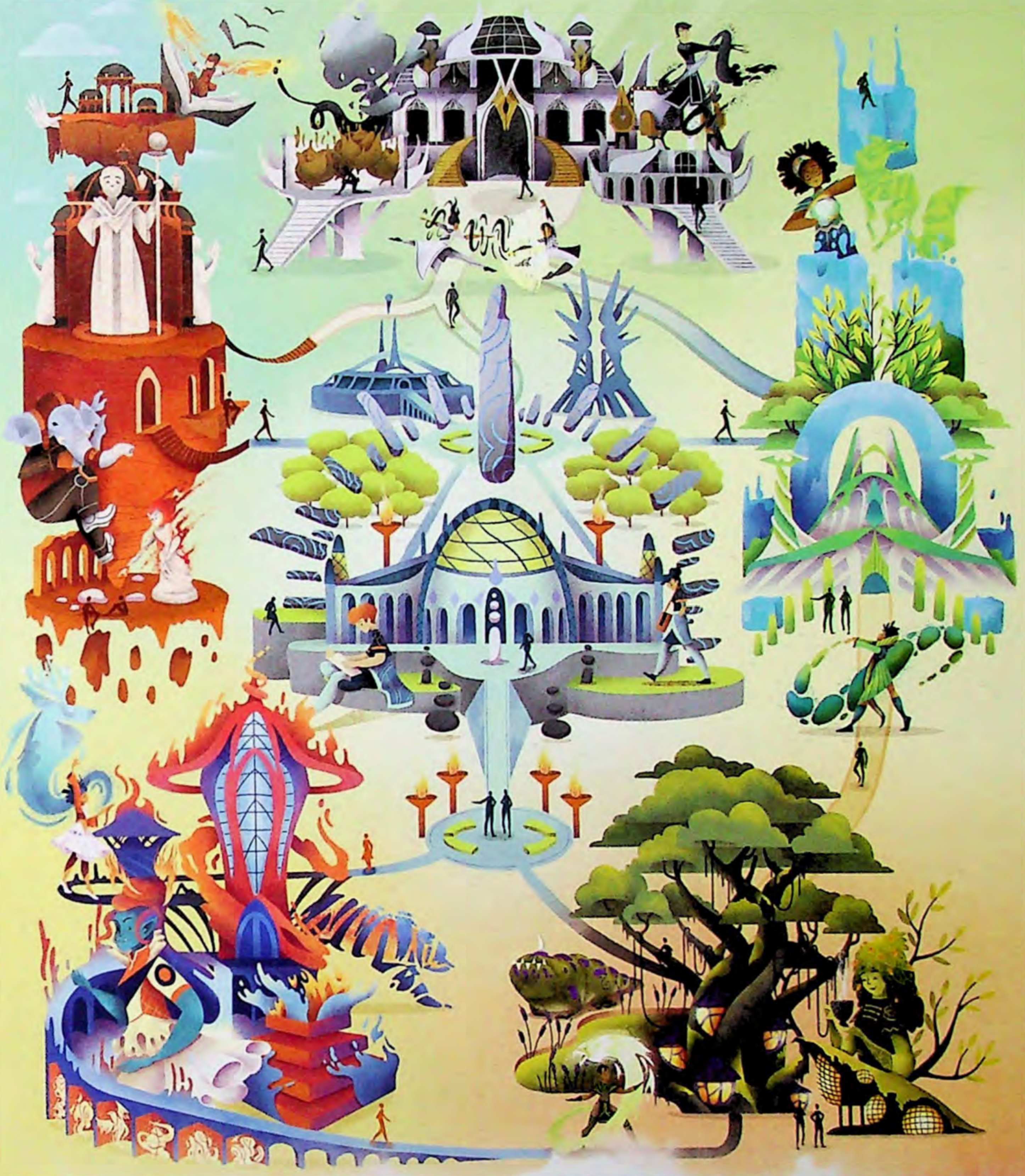
FOUNDER DRAGONS

College	Founder
Lorehold	Velomachus Lorehold
Prismari	Galazeth Prismari
Quandrix	Tanazir Quandrix
Silverquill	Shadrix Silverquill
Witherbloom	Beledros Witherbloom

ARCHAICS AND THE ORACLE

The Oracle of Strixhaven is the wisest and most accomplished mage in the world of Arcavios, selected by the Founder Dragons. The Oracle's lifelong task is to ensure that magic is used to help people and not twisted to evil ends. To be the Oracle, one must understand fundamental truths about the nature of magic, know and wield hundreds of spells, and possess impeccable judgment and virtue.

Mysteriously linked to the Oracle, archaics are wise, giant, long-lived beings with an innate talent for magic. They can be seen striding through the wilds, exploring sources of magic with their many arms or contemplating existence through their "eye," which functions as a magical focus of some



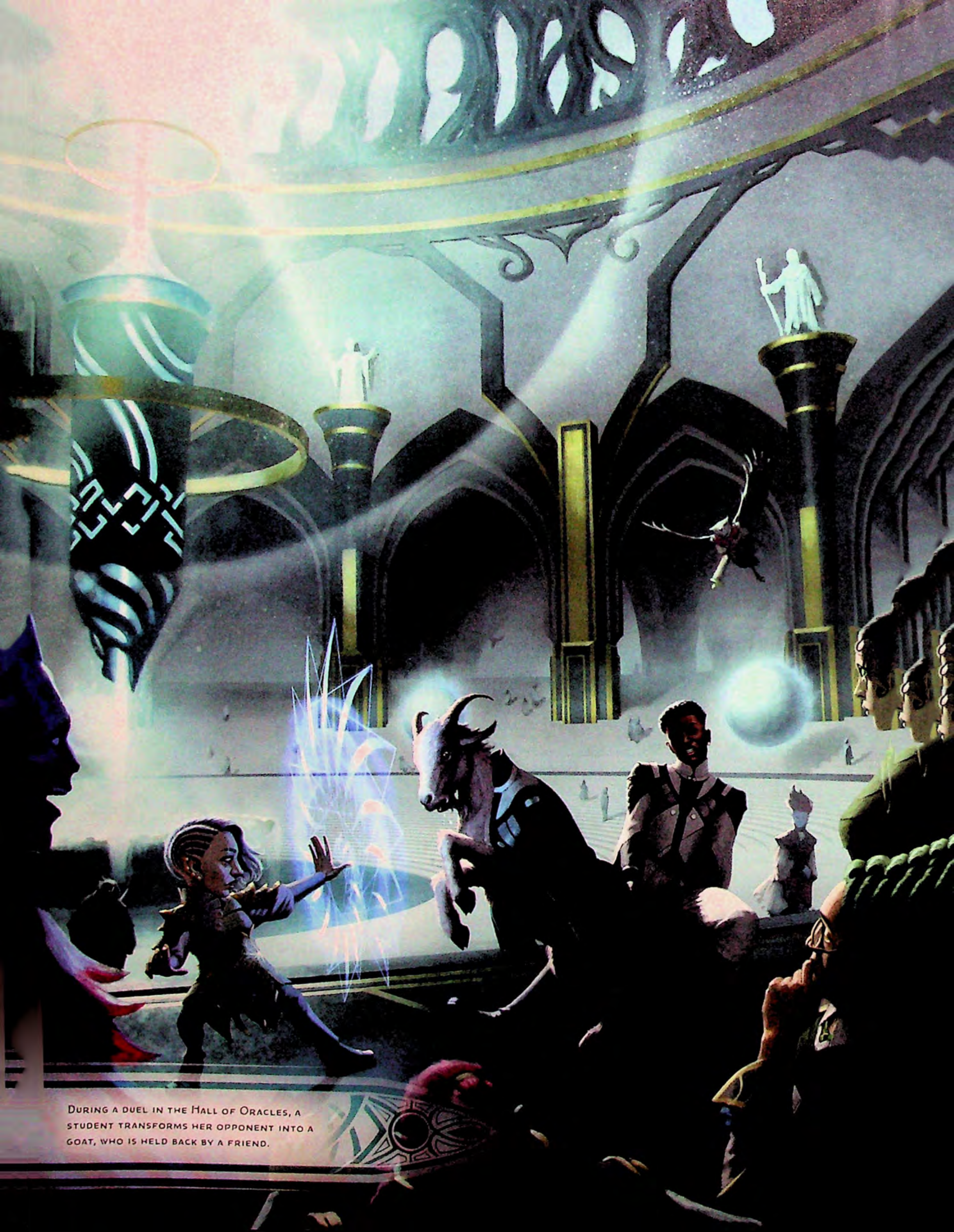
Strixhaven University, with the (Center) Biblioplex Surrounded by (Top) Silverquill and (Going Clockwise) Quandrix, Witherbloom, Prismari, and Lorehold

kind. Scholars seek out archaics for their vast knowledge of history and magic, but archaics tend to communicate in obscure allusions and cryptic metaphors.

Few know that archaics' existence is linked to a time-warping phenomenon involving the Oracle. When an Oracle dies, their mind and spirit is swept off to the distant past, drawn backward through time toward the intense magical power that brought the world into being. Splinters of that Oracle's soul and its fragmented memories coalesce into a creature—a newborn archaic. Every archaic alive today was born at the dawn of time from the mind of someone who has lived and died (or who will one day live and die) as an Oracle. Archaics speak in cryptic allegories not only to tease and test the eager minds of young mages, but also to cleverly sidestep time paradoxes.

Stat blocks for archaics appear in chapter 7, alongside that of the current Oracle, whose name is Jadzi.

LUIZA LAFFITTE



During a duel in the Hall of Oracles, a student transforms her opponent into a goat, who is held back by a friend.

CHAPTER 1

Life at Strixhaven

Strixhaven University sparkles with the enthusiasm of its students and faculty, as they study, debate about, and experiment with magic in its varied forms. This chapter offers an overview of life and studies on the university's campus, as well as a look at each of the five colleges where students explore different modes of magical study.

Magical Study

The fundamental work of Strixhaven University is the application of magic to academic study. Students and faculty aren't limited to magical topics alone; they pursue studies in every facet of existence—magical or otherwise—applying magic to whatever they study. At Strixhaven, historians call the spirits of the dead to aid their lessons about the past, and arcano-biologists use necromancy to pull at life and coax out death when teaching about the natural world. Simultaneously, mage-artists sculpt elemental energy to create animate art, and arcane symbologists teach students how to recognize and understand the magical glyphs they encounter.

Principles and Polarities

The colleges and curriculum at Strixhaven are organized around the idea of philosophical principles joined in concordant opposition. Each school embraces the paradoxical unity of two polar principles: life and death, order and chaos, reason and emotion, and so on. The five Founder Dragons are thought to embody the coexistence of these principles, while the ten deans of the colleges stand for the individual principles distinguished from their opposites.

A student's course of learning at Strixhaven involves exploring the tension between these opposing principles, which typically involves late-night arguments in residence halls and study rooms. The university's teaching philosophy is built on the idea that exploring opposites leads to an understanding of a greater whole. Most people believe that only a being with the wisdom (and long life) of the Founder Dragons or the archaics can truly master both halves of a school's dichotomy, but a mage must learn at least the rudiments of those halves. A Strixhaven graduate is expected to leave the university prepared to argue the fundamental issues of their school's philosophies.

ROBSON MICHEL

Faculty

The faculty members of Strixhaven are mages and scholars—experts in their various fields and in the use of magic to enhance their studies. They are dedicated to their research and to educating generations of mage-students who follow in their footsteps. Some faculty members value research more than teaching, while others make education their highest priority. But all find some balance between the two.

Instructors

Strixhaven's faculty begin their careers as instructors, focusing primarily on teaching classes and crafting curriculum, while the school administration evaluates their performance. At the end of a provisional period, which can last from one to several years, an instructor is elevated to the rank of professor or let go.

Professors

Professors who have distinguished themselves over the course of a long career—typically at least twenty years—hope to be recognized with the title of esteemed professor. This honor is bestowed in recognition of groundbreaking research as well as exceptional teaching.

Upon retiring, a professor receives the title of mage emeritus. Mages emeriti are held in high esteem and welcomed to campus as guest lecturers.

Students

Students at Strixhaven spend their first year in a course of general studies, which lays the foundation for the more specialized work to follow. During this year, they wear a uniform of black, white, and gray. They're encouraged to study broadly so that they become acquainted with a wide range of disciplines.

First-year students live in dormitories located on the central campus and often form close friendships there that last throughout their educational careers, even when members of tight-knit groups of friends join different colleges in their second year. A few students continue to live on central campus after choosing a college, particularly if they pursue extensive studies in multiple colleges or work as resident advisers to first-year students. But most students move to dormitories located on their chosen college's campus in their second year.

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

Before starting their second year of studies, students choose one of the five colleges—Lorehold, Prismari, Quandrix, Silverquill, or Witherbloom—to be their academic home for the remainder of their education. From this point, students wear uniforms featuring the colors of their college, though these outfits aren't as unvarying as the first-year garb.

Two Counselors. Upon choosing a college, a student is assigned two professors to serve as counselors to help the student plan a course of studies. The two deans of the college assign these two counselors, who represent the poles of the college's philosophical opposition. By design, the two counselors tend to offer conflicting advice, forcing the student to navigate opposing principles. For example, a student pursuing historical studies in Lorehold College might have one counselor who focuses on the unpredictable, war-filled chaos of historical reality and another who dwells on the idea of an orderly progression toward an ideal. The former might encourage the student to choose courses based on gut feeling, to delve into the military aspects of an issue, and to supplement their academic studies with some practical martial training. The other counselor, meanwhile, might offer several ordered, rational proposals for course selection, focus on the political and human aspects of historical issues, and place less emphasis on martial prowess. The student must then navigate this conflicting advice and chart their own course.

Course of Study. Some students, having chosen a college, spend virtually all their remaining school years on that campus and study with those professors, diving into their preferred area of study and related fields. Other students take as many as a third of their classes in other colleges, continuing the breadth of their first-year education and looking for places where the perspectives of other disciplines can bring new insight to their studies. Both approaches are encouraged at the university.

AFTER STRIXHAVEN

A student's course of study at Strixhaven lasts at least four years but allows for advanced study for several years beyond that time frame. Most students eventually graduate, though, and they walk a variety of paths after leaving the university. Many return to whatever home they came from, putting what they have learned to use in their communities. Some mages travel the multiverse in search of ever-greater magic, continuing their research in some form beyond the confines of an academic program. A few alumni return to Strixhaven, sooner or later, as instructors themselves, and a small, select number join the Dragonsguard, an elite force of mages who work with the Founder Dragons.

ADMINISTRATION

The day-to-day functioning of Strixhaven relies on hundreds of laborers, clerks, coaches, administrators, and others. These personnel include folk like Mavinda Sharpbeak, the kindly owlin guidance counselor who takes first-year students under her wing, and Gyome, the troll chef of Witherbloom College. In addition to legions of people who devote their lives to the university's operations, numerous automatons and artificial life-forms—various kinds of Constructs—serve in various roles, including campus guides and library assistants.

All these operations are managed by an administration overseen by the ten deans, two in each college. Each dean is an esteemed professor who embraces one side of their school's philosophical dichotomy. The deans, like the professors who serve as counselors to students, view it as their role to disagree with each other and guide the college by way of their arguments. Furthermore, rivalries among the deans only exacerbate this combative attitude.

When the argumentative deans fail to chart a coherent course for Strixhaven, the Founder Dragons are occasionally forced to intervene. They don't step in directly, but a director known as the Voice of the Founders—currently an imposing man named Taiva—speaks on the dragons' behalf.

MASCOTS

Each of Strixhaven's five colleges has a mascot—a small creature associated with the magic of the school and often found wandering their respective campuses. Witherbloom's mascots, pests, are naturally found in the world around the campus. The other colleges' mascots are brought into being through magic. The Strixhaven Mascots table lists the mascots by college. Each of these mascots is detailed in chapter 7.

STRIXHAVEN MASCOTS

College	Mascot
Lorehold	Spirit Statue Mascot
Prismari	Art Elemental Mascot
Quandrix	Fractal Mascot
Silverquill	Inkling Mascot
Witherbloom	Pest Mascot

The five kinds of mascots act as companions for students and faculty, sometimes serving as willing subjects for experiments or demonstrations, and occasionally even helping out in a duel or a more serious combat situation. Most notably, mascots are also playing pieces of sorts in the Strixhaven sport of Mage Tower, described in more detail in chapter 4.

CAMPUS OVERVIEW

Strixhaven occupies hundreds of acres, spread out over six campuses. Each of the university's five colleges has its own campus, and the central campus, home to the Biblioplex and Strixhaven Stadium, serves as a hub for university life. See the appendix or the poster map for a view of the entire university.

Well-maintained roads connect the six campuses, and walking from one to another can take a half-hour or more. Regular shuttles—large carriages drawn by horselike automata—run on an hourly schedule between a station near the Biblioplex and each of the satellite campuses, making the journey in about 15 minutes. In addition, each campus has multiple permanent teleportation circles, which faculty and more advanced students can use when they require instantaneous travel, and several magical portals exist as well. These portals can be unpredictable: they aren't necessarily open all the time, they don't always lead to the same places, and some require complicated conditions or keys to open.

CENTRAL CAMPUS

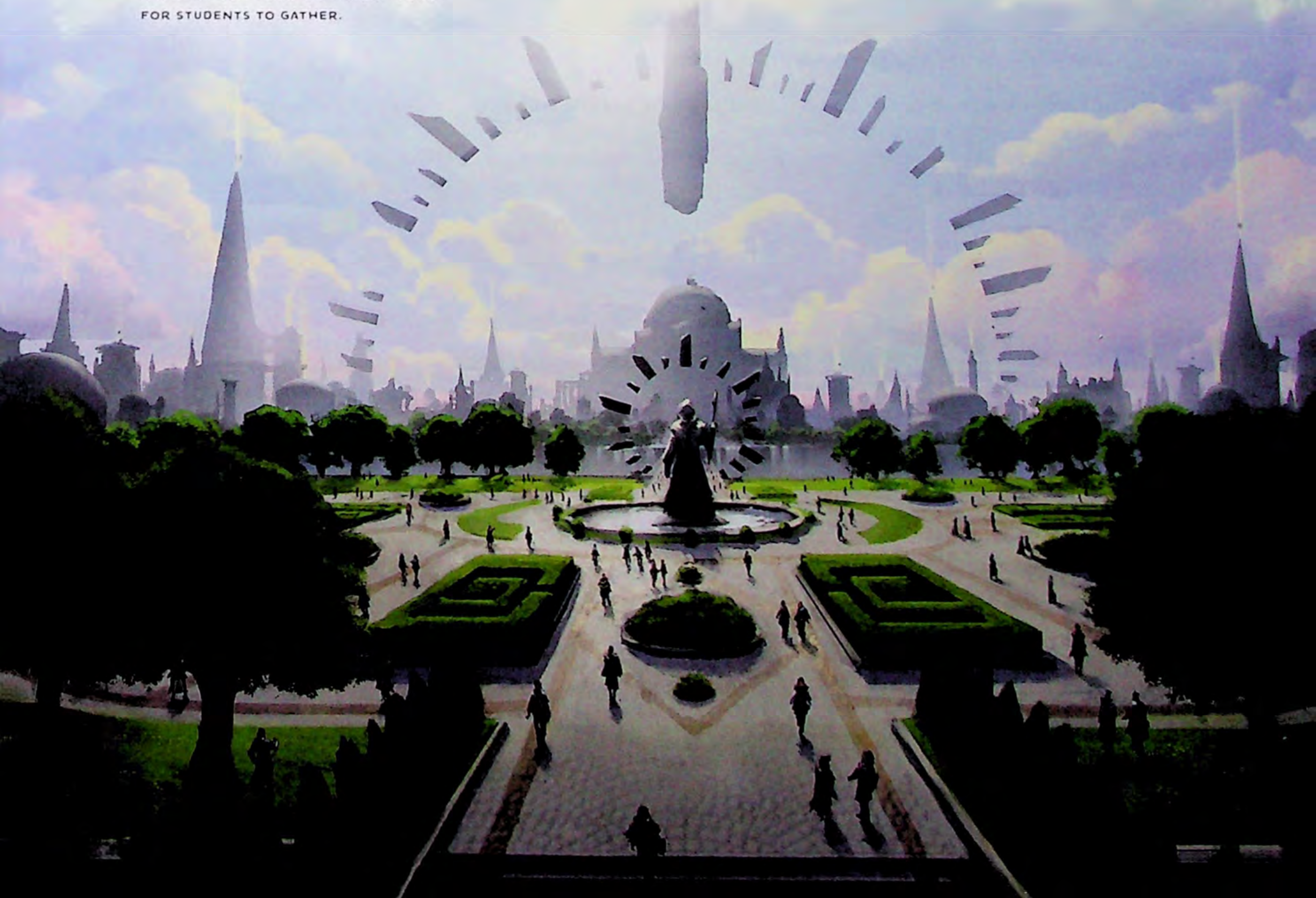
The central campus—shown on map 1.1—is the heart of Strixhaven. Its extensive grounds include residence halls for first-year students, dining halls, administration buildings, classrooms and laboratories (mostly used for first-year classes and interdisciplinary studies), and space for social gatherings.

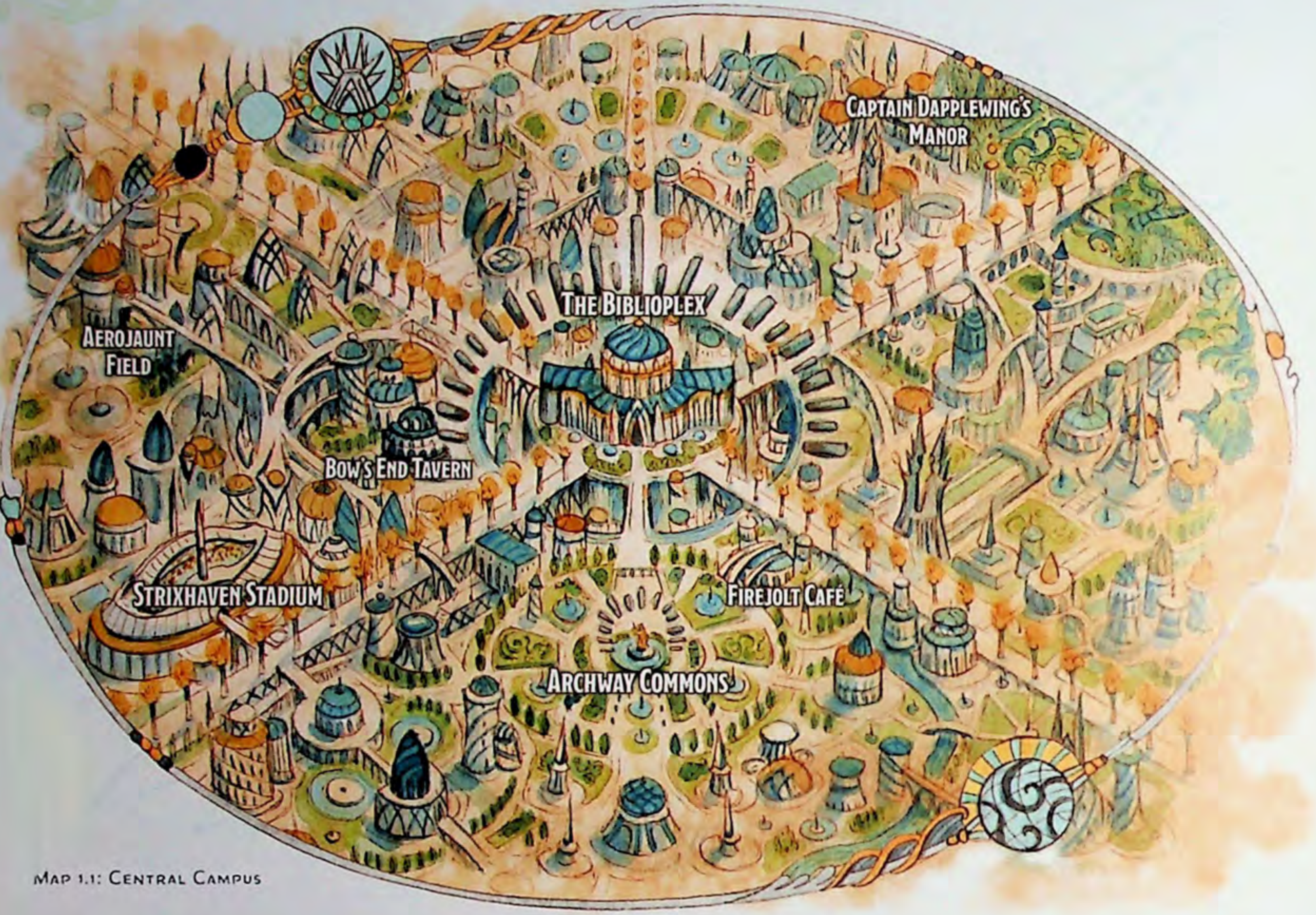
Two of the sites on map 1.1 are described elsewhere in the book: Aerojaunt Field (see chapter 4) and Captain Dapplewing's Manor (see chapter 3).

THE BIBLIOPLEX

The center of Strixhaven is the Biblioplex, the university's main library. At the heart of the library is a snarl, a tangle in the fabric of magic, that glows like a miniature sun in the grand Hall of Oracles. A star arch called the Dawnbow curves across the sky above the library, marking its location as a center of mystic learning.

ARCHWAY COMMONS IS A FAVORITE SPOT FOR STUDENTS TO GATHER.





Map 1.1: Central Campus

Arches welcome inquisitive minds into the library. Inside, almost every surface from the floor to the high ceiling is jammed with stacks of books. The interior of the Biblioplex is vast, with long hallways, archive chambers tall enough to have their own weather, and even pools and moat-passages crossable only by boat.

Five lines of beacon-towers radiate from the Biblioplex like enormous spokes. These Torches of Enlightenment stretch out to the five college campuses and beyond, more than a hundred miles into the surrounding countryside. They burn perpetually with magical flame, symbolizing the path toward learning and an escape from ignorance.

Archway Commons

Just south of the Biblioplex, a star arch curves overhead like a smaller echo of the Dawnbow, and a lush park, Archway Commons, marks the site. More familiarly called the Commons, the park is a favorite spot for students—especially first-years—to gather in fair weather or to wander through on dates. Some of the university's clubs also use the park to host social gatherings and games, including live-action roleplaying games and casual sports.

Firejolt Café

At the edge of Archway Commons and just outside the Biblioplex stands the cozy Firejolt Café, where students cram both information and caffeine into themselves before exams. The café's name comes from its trademark beverage, which the manager, an elf mage named Ellina, brews with her fire magic. The Firejolt has a reputation as a hangout for first-year students, but older students from all five colleges can be seen inside at all hours.

Bow's End Tavern

At the western end of the Dawnbow, where it meets the ground, stands a smaller university landmark: Bow's End Tavern, which serves as a hangout for older students. Most patrons come for the live music, deliciously greasy food, and various potions and beverages. Others come to settle their differences in wild duels in the lot behind the tavern. The tavern's manager is a kind but strict orc named Tulk "the Bulk" Tusktooth.

Strixhaven Stadium

The stadium where thousands gather to watch students play Mage Tower (and sometimes other sports) is located near Bow's End Tavern. Chapter 4 offers more information about Mage Tower.

FRANCESCA BAERALD (L), TITUS LUNTER (R)

Lorehold College

Lorehold is the College of Archaeomancy—a term that describes the exploration of ancient things through magic. Its mages explore the past by poring over archaeological sites, calling forth magical energy from old tomes, and summoning the spirits of long-dead historical figures. Lorehold mages travel far and wide across the world, gathering relics of bygone ages and learning dead languages to unpack the secrets of history.

Studies and Philosophy

Lorehold College is devoted to the study of history, broadly understood to include the various aspects of culture, behavior, and social relationships that shape historical events. Its studies include various subdivisions of history (military history, social history, cultural history), archaeology, anthropology, psychology, sociology, religion, and economics. It overlaps with Prismari College in the field of art history, with some students splitting their studies between the two colleges. Lorehold mages use their magic to unearth secrets and share illumination.

Order and Chaos

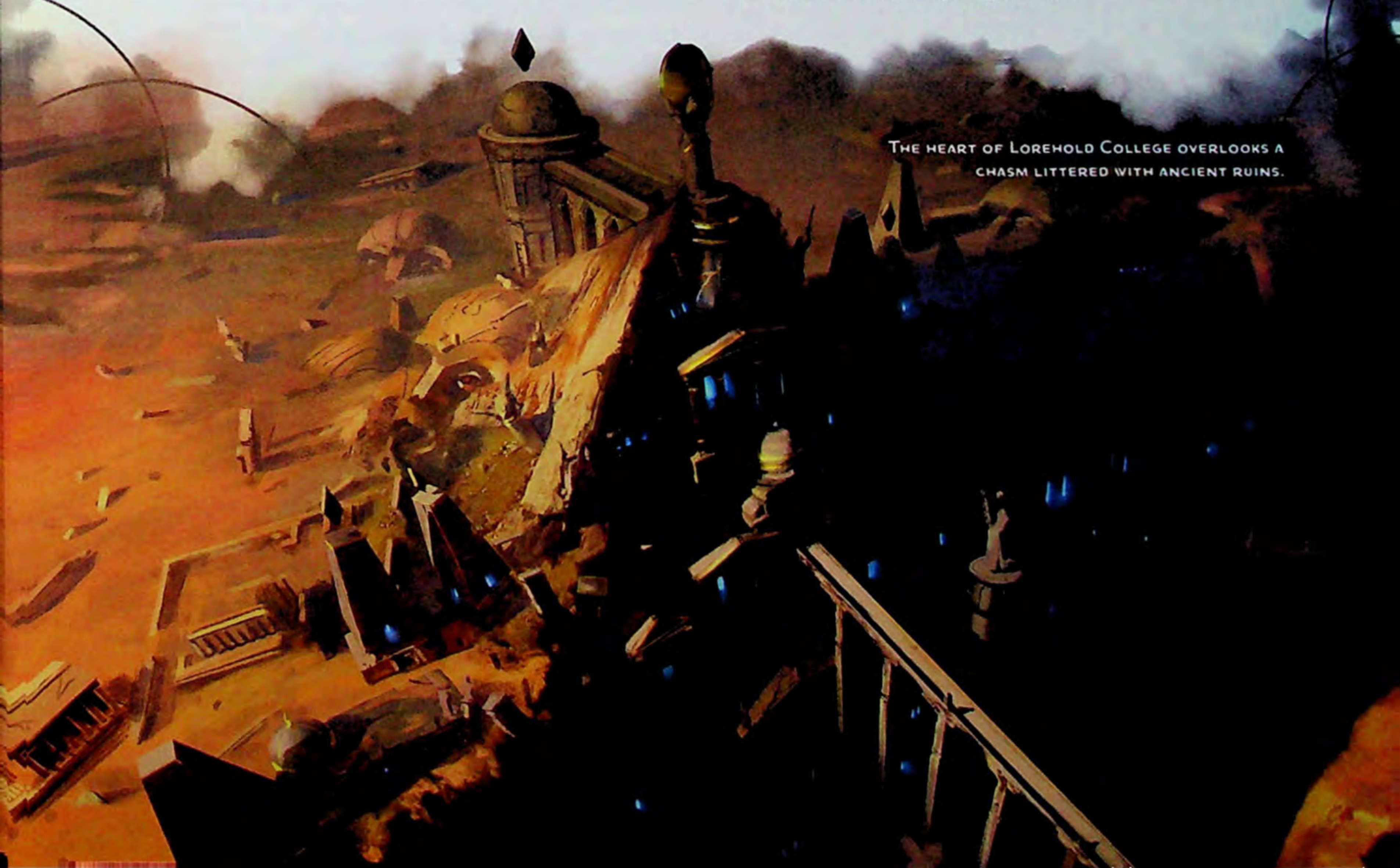
Lorehold's two deans carry the titles Dean of Order and Dean of Chaos, as order versus chaos encapsulates the fundamental conflict at the heart of Lorehold's philosophy. This conflict revolves around the forces that underlie and drive history. Is the course of time driving toward a well-ordered ideal state or slowly devolving into chaos? Are deep patterns hidden in historical texts, or is time a series of coincidence and happenstance?

The perspective of order emphasizes the structures that pull people together—law, religion, economics, education, social class, and so on—and how those structures drive historical events. Order focuses on systemic changes and the actions of people collectively.

The perspective of chaos, by contrast, emphasizes individual actions, personal bonds of families and friends, and the disruptive force of lone, passionate people in history. Scholars of chaos gravitate toward reckless discovery and the spirit of adventure in their research of the past—the essence and emotion of history over precision or procedure.

Scholars of Lorehold

The Lorehold Scholars table offers examples of the scholars in Lorehold College. You may use the table to randomly determine the scholarly focus of a Lorehold student or faculty member. The Principle column notes which side of the order-chaos conflict a scholar more likely aligns with.



The heart of Lorehold College overlooks a chasm littered with ancient ruins.

LOREHOLD SCHOLARS

d10	Scholar	Principle
1	**Archaeoscribe**, chronicling historical truths for posterity	Order
2	**Battle medium**, strengthening summoned spirits for use in battles	Order
3	**Chaos scholar**, chasing down historical anecdotes as a litany of happenstance	Chaos
4	**Conservator**, preserving ancient spell knowledge and other relics of the past	Order
5	**Dustspeaker**, conversing with spirits of the past to learn their stories	Chaos
6	**Pastraiser**, binding spirits into the monuments that bear their likeness to learn about their inspiring deeds	Order
7	**Relic reader**, divining wisdom from the past from the context of ruin sites	Order
8	**Ruin shaman**, wielding magic that helps delve into ancient sites	Chaos
9	**Tomewielder**, summoning fiery magic from the words in old writings	Chaos
10	**Warsinger**, studying the magic used in ancient wars	Chaos

LOREHOLD FACULTY

This section describes noteworthy members of the Lorehold faculty. Some of them use a Lorehold-specific stat block from chapter 7.

AUGUSTA TULLUS, DEAN OF ORDER

Augusta Tullus (lawful neutral human **Lorehold professor of order**) is the current Dean of Order. A professor of spirit studies, she has been called the college's most talented pastraiser. She can conjure entire legions of ghostly apparitions to reenact historical events for her lectures.

Augusta believes that history repeats itself as an orderly progression toward an ideal. In her view, the mistakes of the past can inform the choices of the present, creating a world of peace and order. She plays things by the book and frowns on students who embark on Dean Plargg's dangerous field trips.

Characters have ample opportunity to meet Dean Tullus in the adventure presented in chapter 5.

PLARGG, DEAN OF CHAOS

Plargg (chaotic good orc **Lorehold professor of chaos**) is the current Dean of Chaos. Specializing in military history, Plargg is known for his perfect recall of historical stories, as well as his potent scroll magic. Blind himself, he invented a form of magical embossing called heat lettering, which provides a tactile way to read texts.

Plargg believes that history is full of unpredictable, war-filled chaos and that his students must be ready for anything. He teaches that no rewards come without risk, and his excursions typically end with students heading to the infirmary. He pays little attention to Dean Tullus's work, usually dismissing her attempts to find order in chaos as foolhardy.

HOFRI GHOSTFORGE

When Hofri (neutral good dwarf **Lorehold professor of order**) first enrolled in Strixhaven, he believed his future lay with Prismari. A diligent student, he quickly mastered the technical skills of art, but his magic left something to be desired. After talking with the school's counselor, Mavinda, Hofri decided to try his luck with Lorehold. It turned out he had a natural talent for Lorehold's spirit magic.

His time at Prismari was hardly wasted, however. Combining his artistic skill with his keen spiritual sense, Hofri could visualize a spirit's mortal appearance and construct a viable statue form for them to inhabit. No one in Lorehold's history had previously created a spirit statue from scratch, and Hofri was offered a professorial position after graduation, which he happily accepted.

OSGIR, THE RECONSTRUCTOR

Even by Lorehold standards, Osgir (neutral **stone giant**) is obsessed with relics of the past. A professor of order, he treasures every connection to old civilizations, whether it's a magnificent jeweled crown or an old shovel. As a student, he constantly spent time in detention for hoarding the best finds from Lorehold dig sites in his room; he lost count of how many times he was sternly told, "History belongs to us all!"

So, naturally, he mastered the magical art of duplicative restoration. Not only can he perfectly recreate an ancient object or device from the smallest scrap, but he can also produce a second, identical version for his personal collection. He displays something different every week in his Lorehold office, from a mighty sword of demon-slaying to a delicate elven music box.

GOLWANDA THE BLOODSPILLER

"Have you met Golwanda yet?" is a question that older Lorehold students love to ask second-year students, new to the college. Sooner or later, one professor or another summons this spirit of a notorious stone giant warmonger, ostensibly as a cautionary tale about the dire fate that befalls a society that loses control of its aggressive impulses. Golwanda plays her role with relish, doing her best to strike terror into the students with her bloodcurdling screams and howls of rage.

Losheel, Clockwork Scholar

Losheel (chaotic good loxodon **Lorehold professor of chaos**) is a Humanoid resembling a bipedal elephant. She proudly admits that she is willing to work hard to be as lazy as possible. She turns her brilliant mind to constructing increasingly efficient mechanical helpers, with the goal of one day being able to do anything she wants without standing up.

Lorehold Campus

The Lorehold campus—shown on map 1.2—is situated northwest of the central campus in a region of stark vertical relief. Rugged mesas and steep hills rise from a wide plain, and a great chasm holds the excavated ruins of an ancient settlement. Several star arches encircle rocky peaks and outcroppings, testifying to the powerful magical energy in the vicinity—energy once harnessed by the ancients who used to inhabit this area.

Pillardrop

Part natural chasm, part archaeological excavation, and part new construction, Pillardrop is a series of buildings excavated out of cliffs on the Lorehold campus. Ruins and upgraded halls together are now used for research, classwork, and housing. Precarious bridges link one neighborhood of Pillardrop to another, often directly passing the enormous stone faces of old statues. Every Lorehold class has a story of some careless student making a misstep on one of these bridges or in some particularly crumbling section of the ruins, sometimes with disastrous consequences—and sometimes finding deliverance when a spirit statue appears from nowhere to catch the hapless student before they suffer serious harm.

Effigy Row

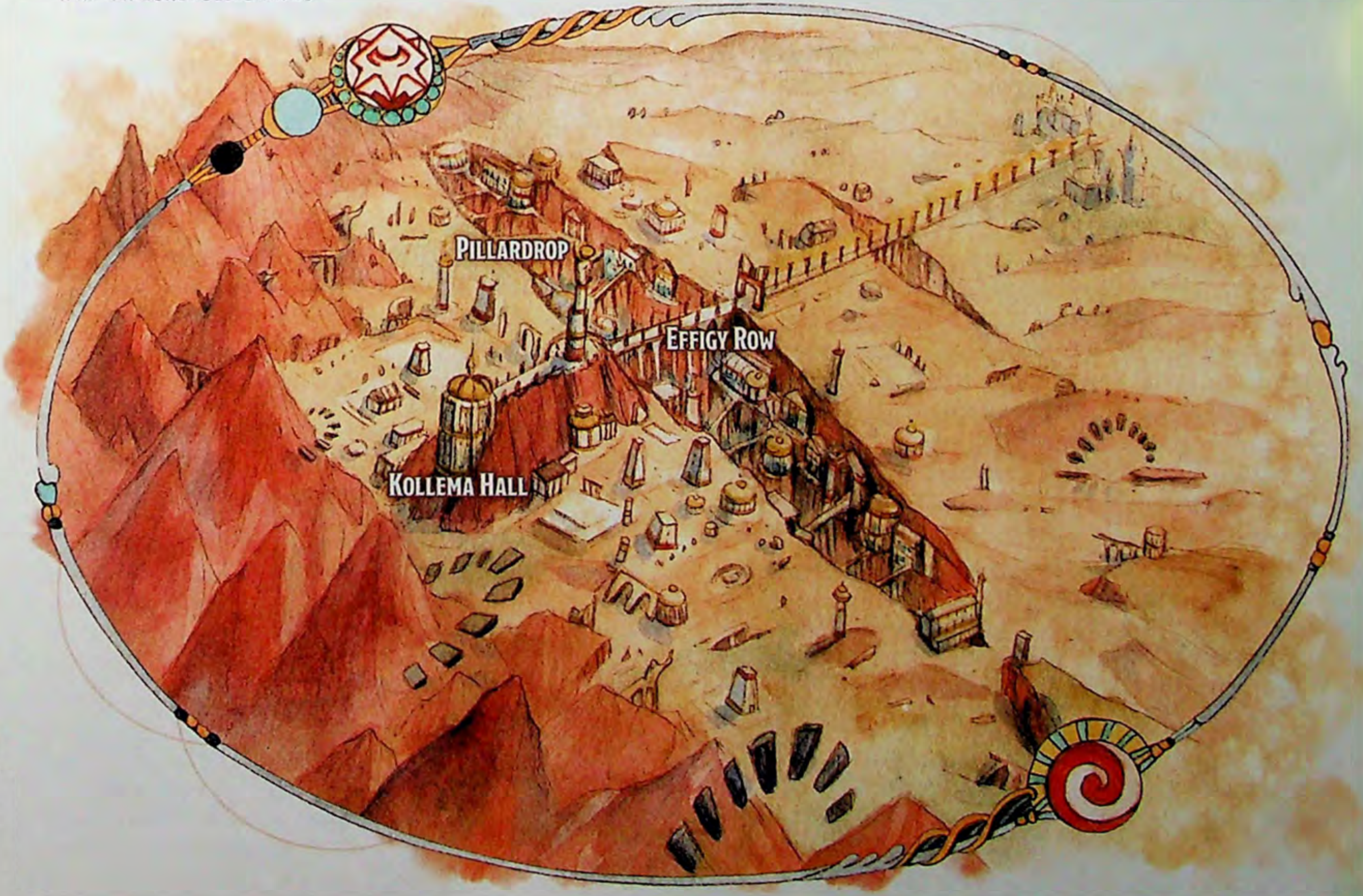
The heart of the Lorehold campus surrounds a soaring bridge that crosses the chasm of Pillardrop. The bridge and surrounding pathways are lined with monuments depicting historic figures, including past professors and prominent mage-students, as well as war heroes and heads of state from ages past.

Kollema Hall

Kollema Hall is a grand, multitiered gallery built into a large outcrop at the end of Effigy Row. Here, Lorehold mages gather for large lectures. At the center of the hall towers a magnificent statue of Kollema, a wise monastic who was one of the first Lorehold professors.

Chapter 5 includes a partial map of Kollema Hall.

Map 1.2: Lorehold Campus



FRANCESCA BAERALD

PRISMARI COLLEGE

Prismari, the College of Elemental Arts, is devoted to the study and practice of art intertwined with magic. The mage-students of Prismari wield magic in spectacles of creativity: masterpieces of showy, over-the-top magic. They use elemental magic to express who they are and how they see the world, often combining different types of energy—fire, water, air, earth, lightning, heat, cold—in powerful expressions of conflict and harmony.

STUDIES AND PHILOSOPHY

Prismari College is dedicated to the arts. Its scholars view art as the fundamental form of self-expression and magic as a tool, a medium, and an inspiration. Prismari studies focus on visual arts (including architecture, painting, and sculpture) and performing arts (such as dance, music, and theater). The curriculum overlaps with Lorehold in the field of art history and with Silverquill in the literary arts, and some students divide their time between Prismari and one of those other schools to pursue these interdisciplinary fields. Prismari mages use magic to weave the elements into their creations; they might juxtapose fire alongside paint, ceramics, or fabric, or they might choreograph elaborate works that unite a dancer's movements with gusts and eddies of air.

PERFECTION AND EXPRESSION

Prismari's two deans carry the titles Dean of Perfection and Dean of Expression, and they often express the fundamental conflict of their philosophy as perfection versus expression—or, sometimes, as intellect versus emotion. What is the purpose of art? Is it to make people think things or make people feel things? Is it supposed to be carefully thought out or raw and spontaneous? Is mastery of art a matter of honing precise techniques to a point of perfection or of perfectly expressing a raw emotional state? Does art aspire to express universal truths or intensely personal ones?

OCTAVIA, THE LIVING THESIS

Crafted as a graduate's final project many years ago, Octavia (a **water elemental** that looks like an enormous octopus) took up residence on campus and never left. After all, in its humble opinion, every student deserves the chance to see true art in person. Some say it's incoherent, but really, Octavia is just a very conceptual thinker.

The perspective of perfection focuses on technique, analysis, theory, aesthetics, and universal principles. It embraces intellect over emotion, strives to be thought-provoking and reflective, and aspires to mastery. Its mages tend to use elemental forces of cold, water, and wind.

The perspective of expression instead emphasizes the portrayal of personal emotional truths. Its mages value improvisation, innovation, and rule-breaking, and they often favor elemental magic using fire, lightning, and earth.

SCHOLARS OF PRISMARI

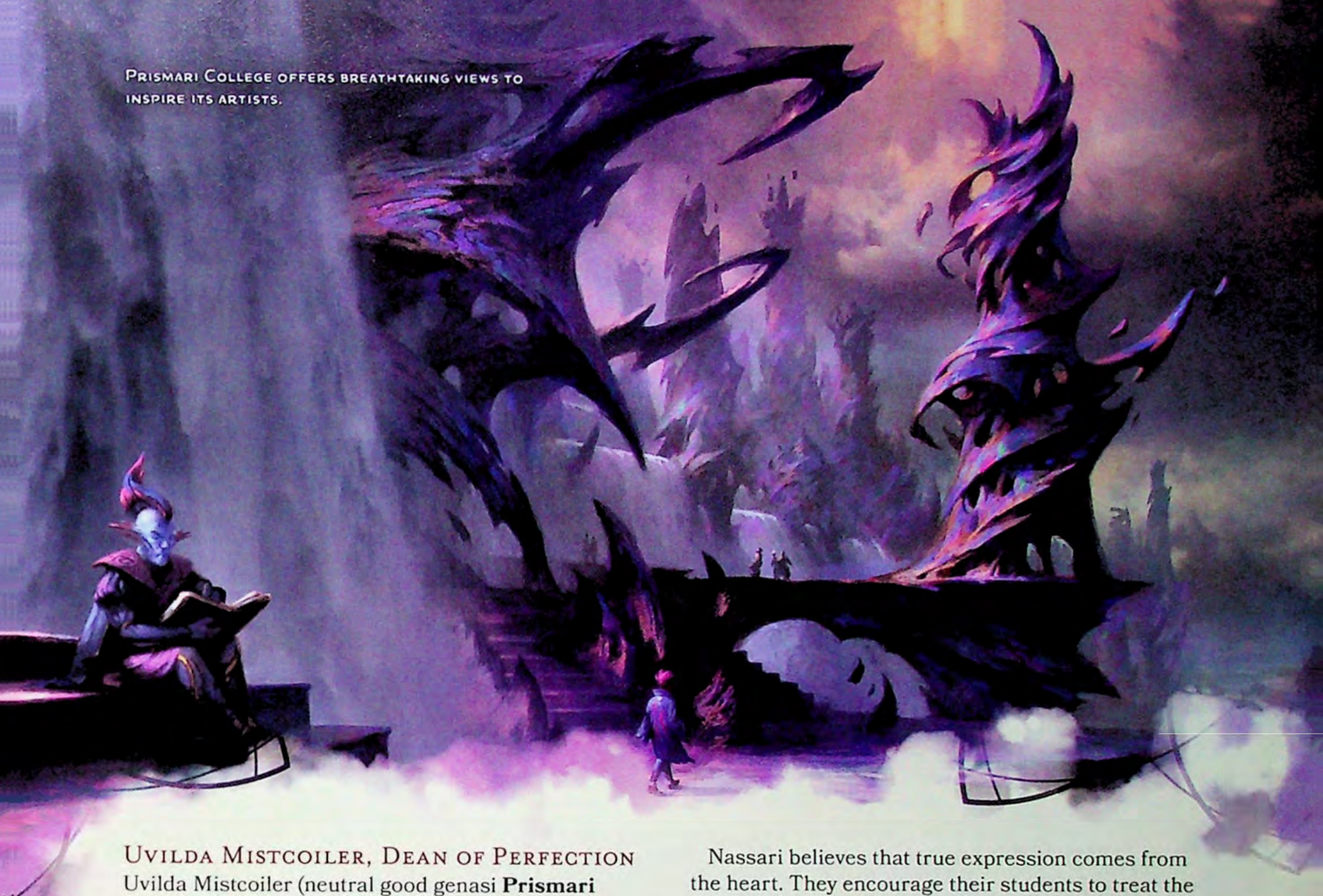
The Prismari Scholars table offers examples of the scholars in Prismari College. You may use the table to randomly determine the scholarly focus of a Prismari student or faculty member. The Principle column notes which side of the perfection-expression conflict a scholar more likely aligns with.

PRISMARI SCHOLARS

d12	Scholar	Principle
1	**Aesthemancer**, studying abstract principles of beauty for insight into the workings of the multiverse	Perfection
2	**Electrovisionary**, wielding the forms of lightning as a paintbrush	Expression
3	**Flamesinger**, combining fire and music	Expression
4	**Geosculptor**, using earth and lava in volatile emotional displays	Expression
5	**Heartrager**, turning inner creative fire into personal strength	Expression
6	**Ice sculptor**, crafting ice and cold into immersive experiences	Perfection
7	**Mistmage**, shaping cloud, fog, and mist into lasting sculptures	Perfection
8	**Muse channeler**, projecting blasts of inspiration toward others	Expression
9	**Opusmancer**, creating magical effects on a monumental scale	Perfection
10	**Spectacle mage**, hurling stormy displays into the sky	Expression
11	**Waterbinder**, shaping water into animated elemental forms	Perfection
12	**Zephyrist**, weaving wind with dance	Perfection

PRISMARI FACULTY

This section describes noteworthy members of the Prismari faculty. Some of them use a Prismari-specific stat block from chapter 7. Several of them are genasi, who are Humanoids touched by the Elemental Planes.



Prismari College offers breathtaking views to inspire its artists.

ADAM PAQUETTE

UVILDA MISTCOILER, DEAN OF PERFECTION

Uvilda Mistcoiler (neutral good genasi **Prismari professor of perfection**) is the current Dean of Perfection. A master of artistic technique, Uvilda trains with a range of elements whenever she isn't focused on her teaching. She is known for giving students profoundly insightful feedback, which she tailors to each individual. After a review, she often offers a small piece of advice that alters the student's point of view and work forever—for the better.

Uvilda believes that good art comes from the head. To her, carefully measured strokes and deliberate object placement make the difference between fully realized art and a total mess. If Dean Nassari interrupts her careful work with bombastic expressions one more time, Uvilda is prepared to enroll in Quandrix to learn how to shrink Nassari.

NASSARI, DEAN OF EXPRESSION

Nassari (chaotic good genasi **Prismari professor of expression**) is the current Dean of Expression. Nazzari always want to see art that is bigger, more radical in concept, and more emotionally powerful. For their final project as a mage-student, Nassari famously "turned in" an earthquake, which almost destroyed three campus buildings. The piece received a standing ovation from the mage-student body—and a grumpy thumbs down from the campus construction golems.

Nassari believes that true expression comes from the heart. They encourage their students to treat the entire world as a canvas on which to spread emotion and excitement. Nassari takes little heed of Dean Mistcoiler's quiet masterpieces and often feigns forgetfulness about Dean Mistcoiler's very existence.

VEYRAN, VOICE OF DUALITY

In addition to being an accomplished elementalist, Veyran (chaotic good genasi **Prismari professor of perfection**) serves as a mentor to many Prismari pledgemages. She advocates enthusiastically for the importance of both passion and disciplined technique in any artistic pursuit. If a new student is upset or overwhelmed, she eagerly calls forth playful, beautiful elemental creatures to cheer up the student.

ZAFFAI, THUNDER CONDUCTOR

As soon as Zaffai (chaotic neutral human **Prismari professor of expression**) came of age, his parents sent him to Strixhaven, assuring him his budding musical genius deserved the finest instruction in the world. (In truth, though he did possess prodigious talent, they were also growing tired of their house being randomly struck by lightning or engulfed in cyclones whenever he practiced.) Even as he flourished as both mage and musician, he discovered a new aptitude: conducting.

In addition to teaching, he serves as Grand Maestro of Strixhaven's Orchestra of the Arcane, an elite extracurricular activity for top Prismari students. They practice only outdoors, and their concerts fill the sky with beautiful explosions of elemental magic.

ARKIN MINEXES, PEPPY INSTRUCTOR

Arkin (lawful good human **Prismari professor of expression**) is a newly hired instructor teaching a few courses in choreography and dance ensembles. He recently graduated from Strixhaven himself, and he bubbles with excitement at the prospect of guiding a new generation of students on the course of study he so greatly enjoyed. He particularly delights in finding new ways to help students work collaboratively to unlock the heights of their creative potential.

Characters might encounter Instructor Minexes in chapter 6.

PRISMARI CAMPUS

Southwest of the central campus, the Prismari campus—shown on map 1.3—is situated in a region of jagged rocks, rugged spires, and intense geothermal activity.

CONJUROT HALL

The center of the Prismari campus is Conjurot Hall, a towering structure with a glassed-in observation area at the top. Constantly changing strands of elemental energy encircle the structure. Artist-mages can see for miles from Conjurot's main turret, and the view has inspired many artistic creations.

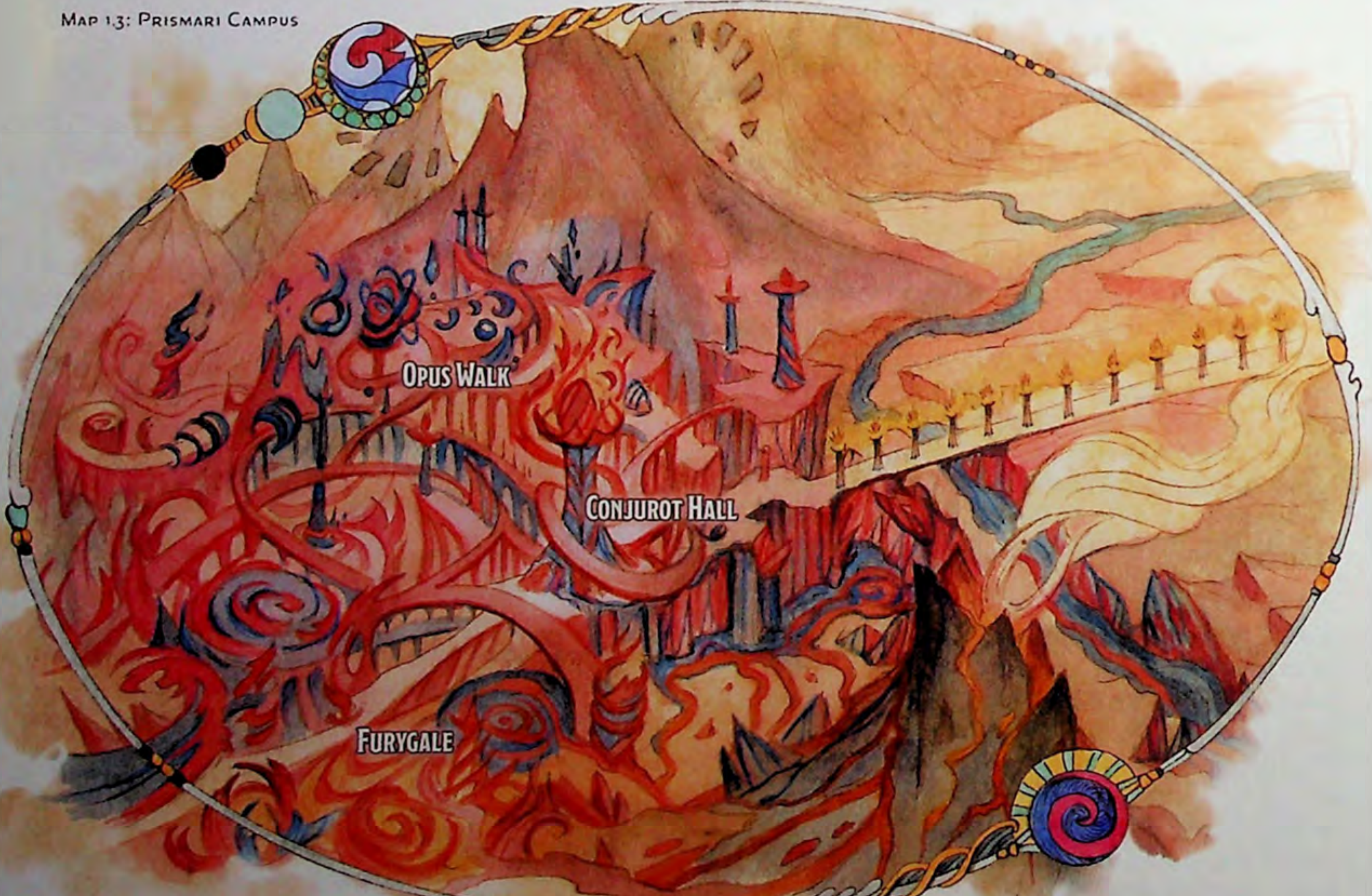
OPUS WALK

Hundreds of Prismari creations are displayed along a path that winds through the central campus buildings, giving the path its name: Opus Walk. Some famous pieces of magical art have been displayed along Opus Walk for centuries, while other transient bursts of creativity last only a few moments.

FURYGALE

At the outskirts of the Prismari campus, the abandoned creations of thousands of past artist-mages have coalesced over the years into the notorious region of Furygale. Roped off by magical wards and warning signs, Furygale is several acres of ever-changing magical energy, gales of ice and wind and fire, and elementals gone rogue. While dangerous, it also provides a source of wild inspiration, and it remains a popular spot for students who want to duel without being interrupted by faculty.

MAP 1.3: PRISMARI CAMPUS



Quandrix College

Quandrix is the College of Numeromancy—a term that encompasses the study of patterns, fractals, and symmetries to wield power over the fundamental mathematics of nature. Quandrix mages can summon creatures made of fractals or turn abstract theories into towering, spiraling patterns. They love to expand and multiply; they can increase their knowledge or size by bending numbers. They dwell in the overlap between the theoretical and the natural—from the fabric of their robes to the nature of their spells, they make use of repeated elements, clever symmetries, and surprising geometry to express the complex truths they study.

Studies and Philosophy

The studies undertaken within Quandrix College include mathematics, physics, logic, statistics, metaphysics, and various fields of theoretical magic. Students from the other colleges occasionally delve into Quandrix courses to bolster the theoretical underpinnings of their studies, and Quandrix's studies of nature and Witherbloom's explorations of practical biology have some significant overlap.

Substance and Theory

Quandrix's two deans carry the titles Dean of Substance and Dean of Theory, reflecting the philosophical division within the college. Is mathematics a natural force that exists in the universe independent of the constructs of intelligent minds, or is it a theoretical framework created by those who study it? Is the work of the scholar to discover what is or to define what could be?

The perspective of substance emphasizes physical reality. In this view, math is embodied in the natural forces of the multiverse, waiting to be discovered by those with the intellectual fortitude to delve into those secrets. Quandrix mages who embrace this view use magic to bring numerical concepts to life, creating or altering physical reality out of mathematical possibility.

The perspective of theory focuses on the abstract realms of conjecture and possibility. Its scholars view math as a lens through which a mind can understand the cosmos, not something that exists independently in the world. Mages who embrace this perspective use their spells to weave illusions and manipulate the fabric of magic itself.

Scholars of Quandrix

The Quandrix Scholars table offers examples of the scholars in Quandrix College. You may use the table to randomly determine the scholarly focus of a Quandrix student or faculty member. The Principle column notes which side of the substance-theory conflict a scholar more likely aligns with.

Quandrix Scholars

d8	Scholar	Principle
1	**Abstractor**, using magic to stretch the possibilities of space	Theory
2	**Augmenter**, making creatures and things larger	Substance
3	**Fractalologist**, creating beautiful illusory patterns	Theory
4	**Mana scholar**, studying snarls, leylines, and star arches	Substance
5	**Metamancer**, studying metaphysics to alter reality	Theory
6	**Scale druid**, manipulating the size of plants and animals	Substance
7	**Sequence prophet**, studying repeating patterns that bend the mind	Theory
8	**Vivifier**, conjuring fractal creatures based on biological life	Substance

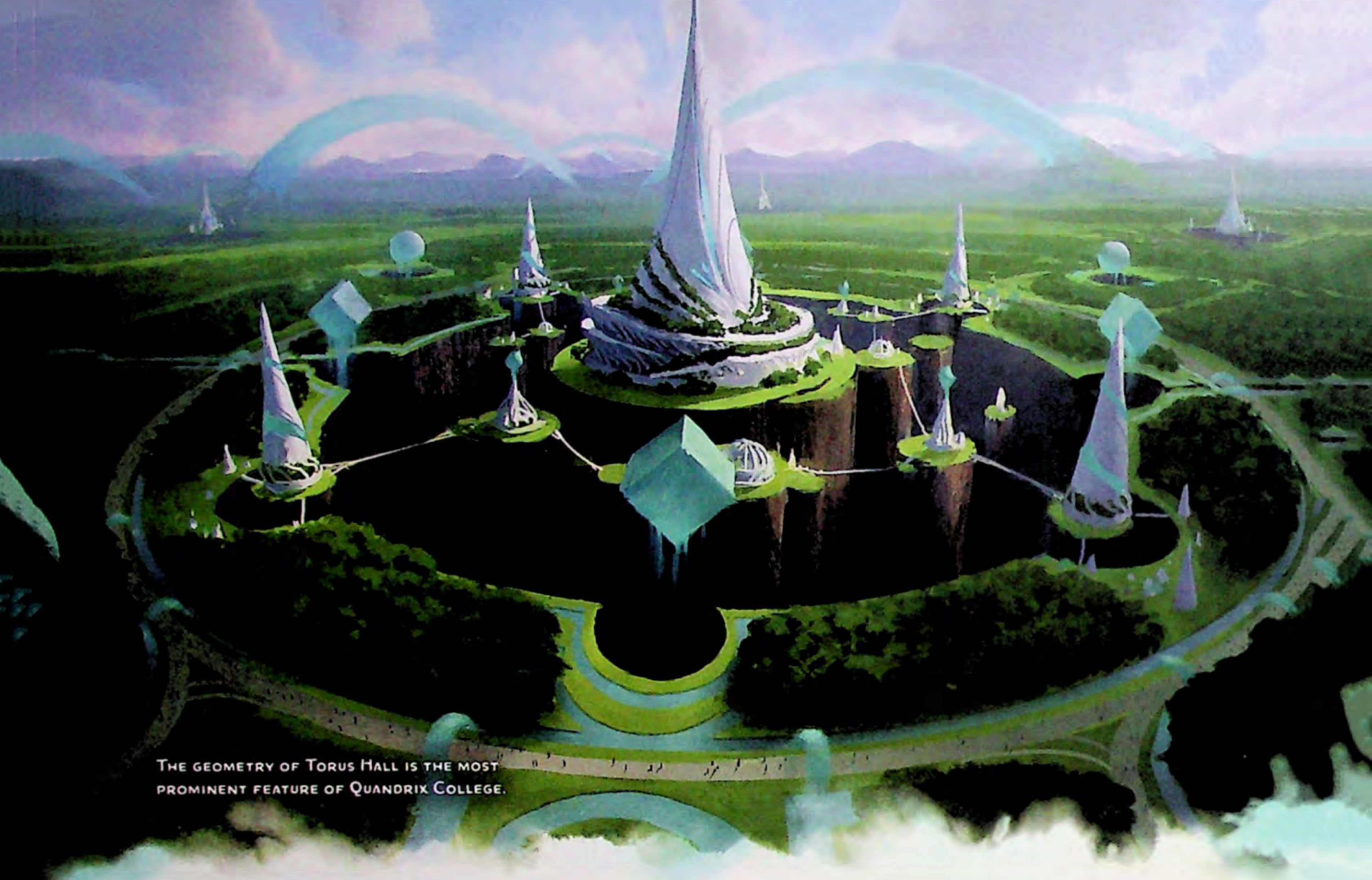
Quandrix Faculty

This section describes noteworthy members of the Quandrix faculty. Some of them use a Quandrix-specific stat block from chapter 7.

Kianne, Dean of Substance

Brilliant and eccentric, Dean Kianne (neutral elf **Quandrix professor of substance**) is one of the preeminent mana scholars of the world. She has visited and studied countless bizarre magical phenomena, from snarls to star arches to ancient shrines. She loves to share her wild theories with anyone who will listen.

Kianne believes in using mathematics to better understand nature. She places an emphasis on practical magic that improves daily life through applied calculations. She rolls her eyes at Dean Imbraham's theories, dismissing them as evidence that her fellow dean lives in an imaginary world.



THE GEOMETRY OF TORUS HALL IS THE MOST PROMINENT FEATURE OF QUANDRIX COLLEGE.

IMBRAHAM, DEAN OF THEORY

Dean Imbraham (neutral owlin **Quandrix professor of theory**) is stern and shrewd, with a mind as piercing as his curved beak. He is known for the unnerving habit of fully rotating his head around to address his students, while still rapidly chalking up complex theorems and equations on a chalkboard. Imbraham loves numbers more than people or the out-of-doors; some say he hasn't gone outside certain chambers of the Quandrix campus in years.

Imbraham wants nothing more than to crack the mysteries of the world through dauntingly complex theories. He offers his students standing bounties on any of his unsolved equations.

ADRIX AND NEV, TWINCASTERS

The twins Adrix (neutral good triton **Quandrix professor of substance**) and Nev (neutral good triton **Quandrix professor of theory**) grew up literally swimming in magic, in an ocean region near a powerful magical snarl. At an early age, they began to see patterns in the tides and currents that eluded even the most esteemed scholars of their society. Once, they saved a hundred lives by predicting the sudden arrival of a tsunami, despite the deceptively calm seas—washing away any doubts in their prowess.

Adrix and Nev now teach as a duo, blending mastery of both of Quandrix's philosophical perspectives. They constantly debate the merits of various esoteric mathematical principles, but if one of their students is in danger, they leap into action in perfect harmony.

DEEKAH, FRACTAL THEORIST

Deekah (lawful neutral human **Quandrix professor of theory**) sees the world as an endless sequence of interconnected equations, which to her is the most beautiful thing imaginable. She explores new theorems by giving them physical form, and her exquisite geometric creations are thrilling sights on campus.

RUXA, PATIENT PROFESSOR

Ruxa (neutral good **Quandrix professor of substance**) looks like a bipedal brown bear and knows that wild new theories, though exciting, are worthless without a deep understanding of the basics. He teaches students of all levels, and even his most experienced pupils benefit from a much deeper understanding of the fundamental building blocks of the world.

QUANDRIX CAMPUS

The Quandrix campus—shown on map 1.4—is situated in a coastal area to the northeast of the central campus, surrounded by lush woodland and abundant rivers and streams.

TORUS HALL

The central hall of Quandrix campus lies at the end of a geometric series of walkways, terminating at ascending ramps to the towering building. Inside, Torus Hall's architecture is mapped to an ever-changing three-dimensional grid, which slowly evolves. Some Quandrix faculty members insist that mage-students shouldn't linger too long inside the hall, lest its geometry eventually turn itself inside out while students are still within it.

THE ARITHMODROME

The Quandrix campus is alive with dynamic sculptures made of water behaving in odd ways: cube-shaped fountains, arching aqueducts that flow through the air, towers of solid-seeming water. One water structure holds a secret: a mysterious inner expanse called the Arithmodrome. From the outside, the Arithmodrome looks like a large cube of water, ten feet on each side. The inside is an apparently boundless theory-space that suspends the rules of reality. Mages use this space to explore theoretical numerical possibilities.

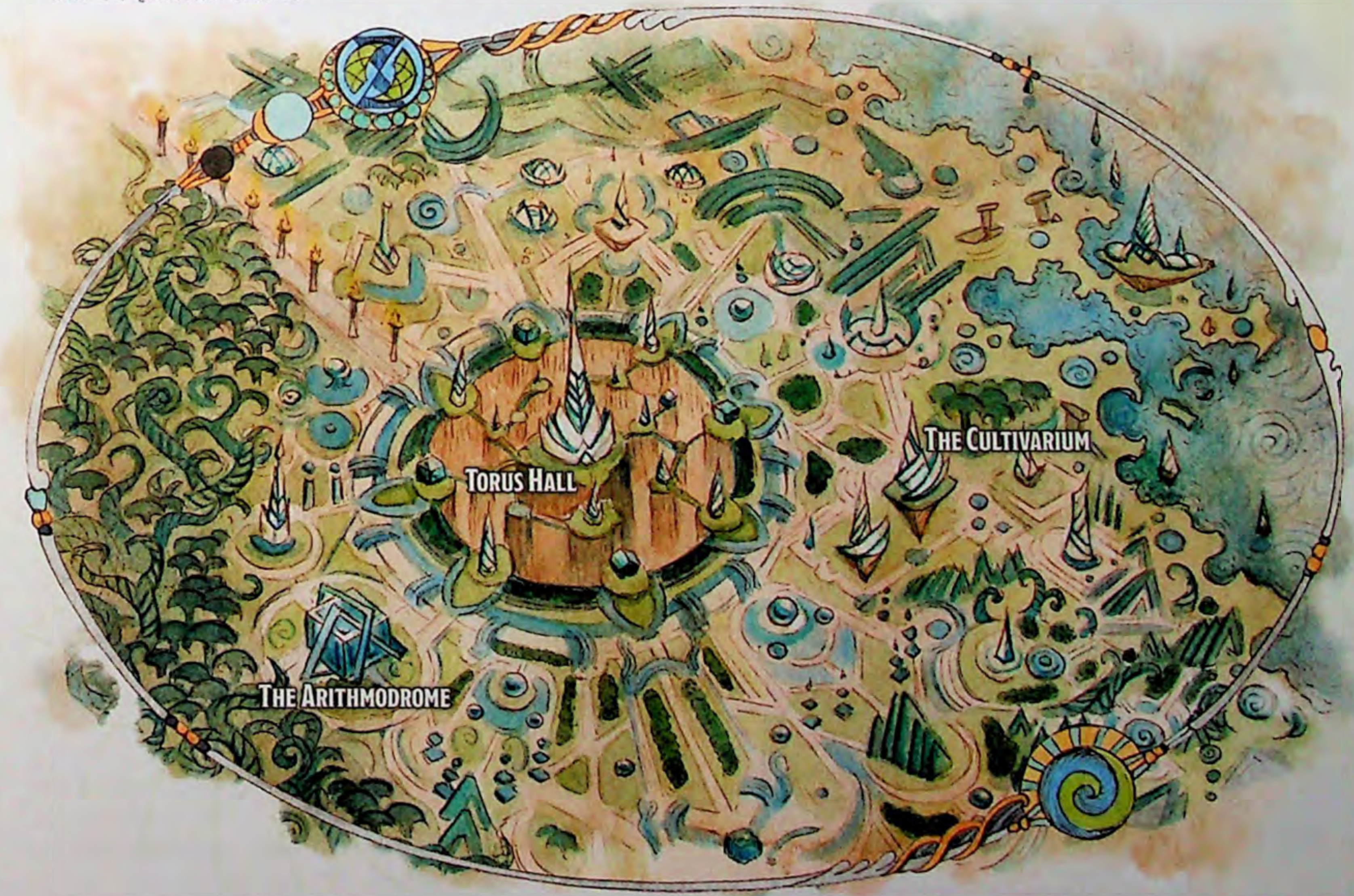
ESIX, FRACTAL BLOOM

Tasked with devising an infinite equation, a group of Quandrix students accidentally created Esix, a living theorem obsessed with infinity. Over the years, a few professors have tried to deactivate it, but all their formulas somehow end up dividing by zero and fizzling out. Esix never seems to register these would-be threats, as it remains consumed by its own calculations.

THE CULTIVARIUM

The Cultivarium is an eye-popping, sun-drenched garden of spiraling, cyclical plants and fractalized animals. Quandrix faculty members have repeatedly taught growth spells in this part of campus, and over the centuries, the area has come to intensify any growth magic cast within it.

Map 1.4: Quandrix Campus



FRANCESCA BAERALD

Silverquill College

Silverquill is the College of Eloquence, and its mages—stylish, intimidating, and driven—are masters of the magic of words. They create spells from spoken-word battle poetry or magical manifestations of the written word, scribing patterns of runic ink in the air. These mages make for natural leaders, fiercely competitive, with a piercing wit and a never-second-place attitude.

Studies and Philosophy

The curriculum of Silverquill College revolves around words, encompassing literature (including fiction, essays, drama, and poetry), languages, linguistics, oratory, rhetoric, and dramatic performance. Students from other colleges often take Silverquill courses to improve their communication skills, learning to speak and write more effectively about their primary field of study. Silverquill and Prismari see overlap in the area of performing arts, with Silverquill emphasizing verbal performance and Prismari focusing more on dance and other forms of movement.

Radiance and Shadow

The two deans of Silverquill are called the Dean of Radiance and the Dean of Shadow, highlighting the college's use of metaphor in describing its philosophical differences. The metaphor of radiance and shadow takes concrete form in Silverquill magic, as students learn to manifest brilliant light or inky darkness with their spells. The fundamental argument among Silverquill's scholars centers on the purpose of communication. Is it to help others or further a personal agenda? Does literature selflessly better society or selfishly advance one's own goals?

The college's perspective of radiance envisions language as sunlight emanating from the speaker or writer to illuminate others and make the world a brighter place. Mages who embrace this view use their language skills—and their magic—to uplift and empower others, to shine light on the evils of society, and to inspire the best in those around them.

The college's perspective of shadow focuses on the power of language to stab, to expose stinging truths, and to obfuscate secrets. The magic of shadow mages often manifests as bolts or blades of darkness or blotches of flowing ink, and its effects range from a sting of shame to an assault on the target's life energy.

Scholars of Silverquill

The Silverquill Scholars table offers examples of the scholars in Silverquill College. You may use the table to randomly determine the scholarly focus of a Silverquill student or faculty member. The Principle column notes which side of the radiance-shadow conflict a scholar more likely aligns with.

Silverquill Scholars

d8	Scholar	Principle
1	**Bantermage**, using incisive observation to pierce rivals' confidence	Shadow
2	**Duskmage**, conjuring inky voids of shadow magic	Shadow
3	**Inkcaster**, summoning living inklings to service	Shadow
4	**Lumimancer**, bringing light to bear on shameful situations and holding corrupt institutions to account	Radiance
5	**Shadewing**, forming weapons from darkness to slice and stab at foes	Shadow
6	**Silvertongue**, bathing others in the light of inspiring words	Radiance
7	**Vainglory**, wielding the power of a perfectly crafted compliment to enhance a person's best qualities	Radiance
8	**Warsinger**, stirring hearts through poetic performance and song	Radiance

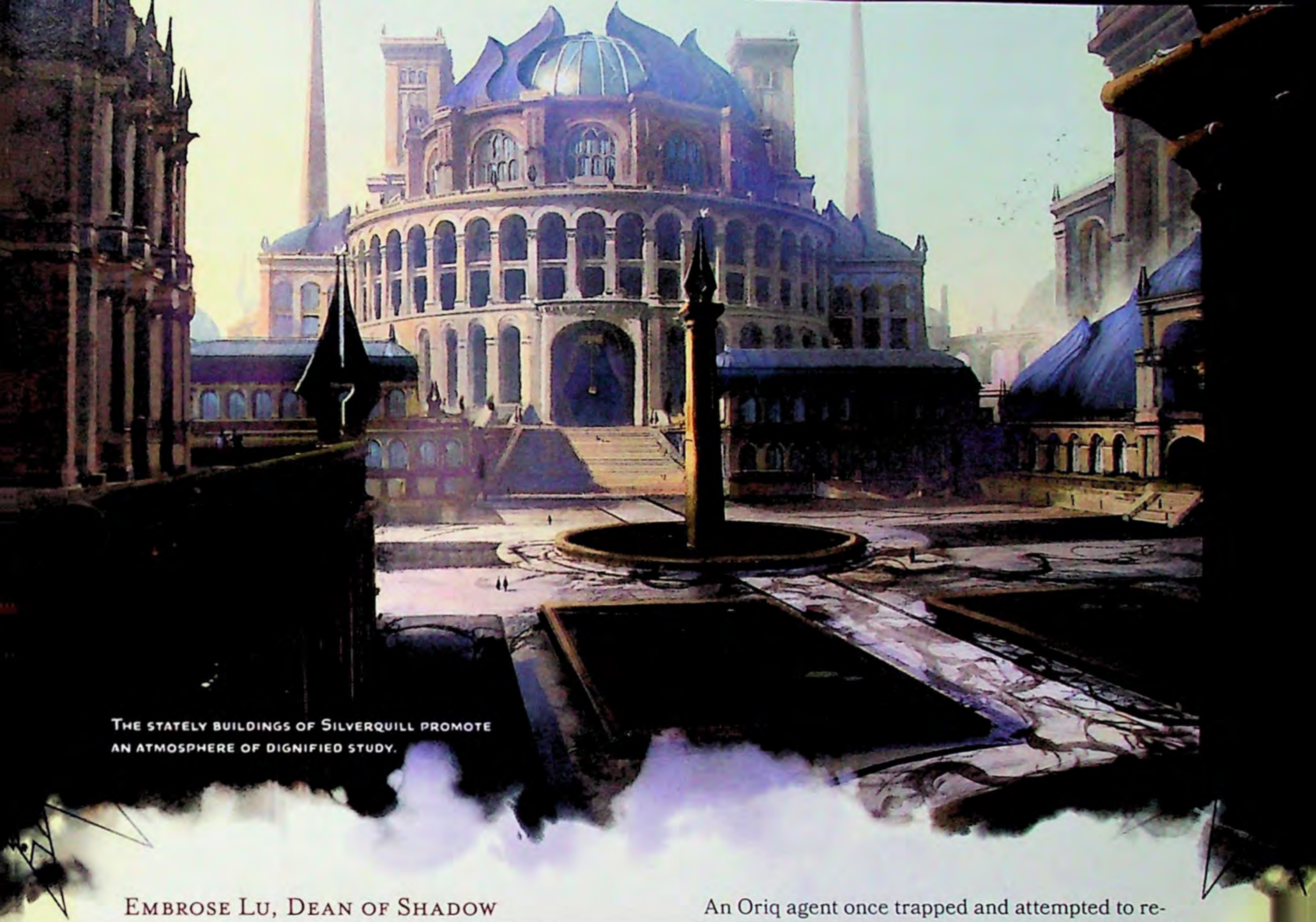
Silverquill Faculty

This section describes noteworthy members of the Silverquill faculty. Some of them use a Silverquill-specific stat block from chapter 7.

Shaile Talonrook, Dean of Radiance

Dean Shaile Talonrook (lawful good owlin **Silverquill professor of radiance**) is a perennially optimistic orator. A master of literature, she often quotes obscure passages from famous texts. Her soul-filling advice and educated references have been known to make people literally glow.

Shaile believes that all people have the potential for good and wishes to teach her students how to make the world a better place. She and Dean Lu often clash over Silverquill's curriculum, but the balance found between them is far more eloquent than even their words can describe.



The stately buildings of Silverquill promote an atmosphere of dignified study.

Embrose Lu, Dean of Shadow

Dean Embrose Lu (lawful neutral human **Silverquill professor of shadow**) is a master poet whose ink magic is merciless. Scant with praise and quick with a cutting remark, Dean Lu has seen many mage-students scrub out of Strixhaven and has nothing good to say about those who can't hack it.

A cynic, Embrose believes that most people are in it for themselves. He demands his students learn how to use language-based magic to "get what they deserve." While he often argues with Dean Talonrook, he holds a deep (if begrudging) respect for the owlin.

Breena, the Demagogue

Breena (neutral good owlin **Silverquill professor of shadow**) has a talent for getting her way. If she wants you to do something, you won't just do it—you'll be sure it was your idea all along. Her students and colleagues alike hang on her every word, and in front of a crowd, she's a powerhouse of charisma, enhancing her speeches with elegant swirls of ink magic. Though she's an elite mage who can easily hold her own in a fight, Breena prefers to defeat her foes with words alone.

An Oriq agent once trapped and attempted to recruit her, threatening her students' lives if she didn't comply. Within an hour, she convinced him to free her, abandon his wicked ways, and seek wisdom from the archaics.

Nils, Discipline Enforcer

Nils (lawful neutral human **Silverquill professor of radiance**) is an optimist, as he believes in every student's potential for greatness. However, this outlook also means he's constantly disappointed by their suboptimal choices, and he is well known for his strictness and abrupt scoldings.

Brenneth Blackstone, Scriptology Star

Brenneth Blackstone (neutral good dhampir **Silverquill professor of shadow**) is a rising star in the study of magical writing and symbols. With a dynamic lecturing style, this dhampir—a partial vampire—attracts students from across Strixhaven purely for his lessons' value as performance art. He teaches a course in scrivening and scriptology that characters take over the course of chapter 4.

TITUS LUNTER

Fain, the Broker

Lost an important textbook? Craving some rare delicacy from home? Need something inconveniently forbidden? Enter Fain (neutral human **Silverquill professor of shadow**). He has an extensive network of connections on and off campus, and he can procure just about anything—so long as you can afford his price.

Silverquill Campus

The Silverquill campus—shown on map 1.5—is located due north of the central Strixhaven campus and looks much like an extension of it. Silverquill is the most urban of the five colleges, with a campus that features buildings of stately elegance.

Grandloft Hall

The main Silverquill building is Grandloft Hall, a vast space with shafts of light streaking in from the enchanted windowpanes far above. Grandloft teems with balconies, loges, booths, daises, and other spaces where orators can perform their craft. Inklings, the college's mascots, flit around the high ceiling, and enchanted spotlights automatically focus on any mage who uses powerful magic.

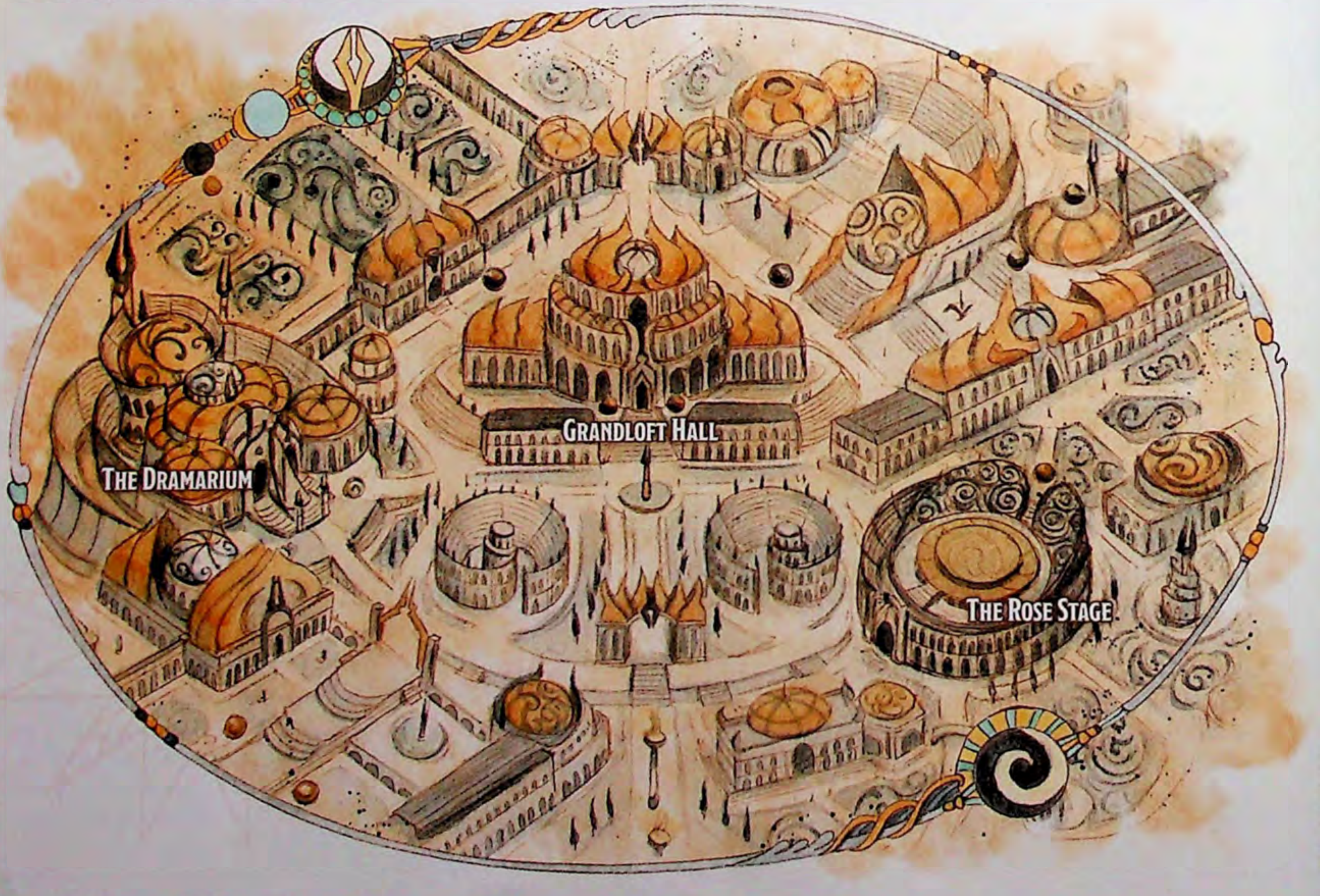
The Rose Stage

The Rose Stage is a rotating circular platform on the Silverquill campus. It has a backdrop of roses made of magical ink (tributes left by spectators of past performances), which creates excellent acoustics. Mage-students meet at the Rose Stage to practice performances, spar, or engage in honor duels. Faculty members often observe performances at the Rose Stage, coaching the students in their magical and rhetorical displays.

The Dramarium

The Dramarium is a facility where Silverquill students train in fitness, dance, martial arts, and other acts of physical performance. Students can avail themselves of the preparation space called the Gray Room (actually a chain of rooms), which has hair and makeup salons, voice rehearsal booths, mirrored rehearsal spaces, and spa facilities. The back of the Dramarium has a special sensory deprivation chamber for mage-students who want complete silence in which to meditate.

Map 1.5: Silverquill Campus



Francesca Baerald

Witherbloom College

At Witherbloom, the College of Essence Studies, mages draw power from the opposing forces of life and death. These mages brew their spells from natural components and the essence of living creatures, using that power to heal or harm the living or to raise or entreat the dead. They can cause entire forests to blossom out of nowhere or call down old curses that scourge flesh from bone. Some Witherbloom mages defend ecosystems from pollution, while others revel in the power of corruption. They're at home riding zombie crocodiles down a languid river, picking herbs for a potion to treat a disease, brooding over a chorus of swamp frogs, or summoning fearsome avatars of nature.

Studies and Philosophy

The curriculum of Witherbloom College focuses on various sciences, revolving around the life sciences. Biology, ecology, botany, chemistry, and related sciences combine with the study and manipulation of the magical energy of the Positive Plane and the Negative Plane, the primal forces of life and death. Witherbloom's curriculum shares some overlap with Quandrix's analysis of the mathematical patterns in nature.

Growth and Decay

The two deans of Witherbloom are traditionally called the Dean of the Root and the Dean of the Vein. These titles are a somewhat abstract way of framing the core division in the college's philosophy: is growth or decay the driving force in nature?

The philosophy of the root (growth) focuses on life and its irrepressible drive to thrive. This view celebrates the diversity and adaptability of lifeforms, from the tiniest cells to the most complex networks of living things. The growth philosophy asserts that the urge to survive and reproduce is the most essential principle in the cosmos. Mages who adopt this view wield positive energy and practice healing magic.

The philosophy of the vein (decay) focuses on the inevitability of death and decay. Its traditional name comes from the prominence of vampires within the college, whose conceptions of draining life through the vein have long proven an important counterweight to the growth philosophy of Witherbloom. The decay philosophy sees life energy as a resource to be consumed, rather than a good to be nourished for its own sake. Mages who adopt this view wield negative energy and practice necromancy.

Scholars of Witherbloom

The Witherbloom Scholars table offers examples of the scholars in Witherbloom College. You may use the table to randomly determine the scholarly focus of a Witherbloom student or faculty member. The Principle column notes which side of the growth-decay conflict a scholar more likely aligns with.

Witherbloom Scholars

d8	Scholar	Principle
1	**Banelock**, using concoctions of noxious ingredients for withering magic	Decay
2	**Bleed doctor**, drain the essence of living creatures to fuel sinister spells	Decay
3	**Boon witch**, brewing drafts to empower the living	Growth
4	**Boughcaller**, summoning creatures from bogs	Growth
5	**Dreadbones**, infusing dead tissue with magic to create Undead servants	Decay
6	**Earthcroucher**, connecting directly with the land to power nature magic	Growth
7	**Leafbinder**, using medicinal herbs to soothe wounds	Growth
8	**Pestcatcher**, harvesting life energy from the pests of the bayou	Decay

Witherbloom Faculty

This section describes noteworthy members of the Witherbloom faculty. Some of them use a Witherbloom-specific stat block from chapter 7.

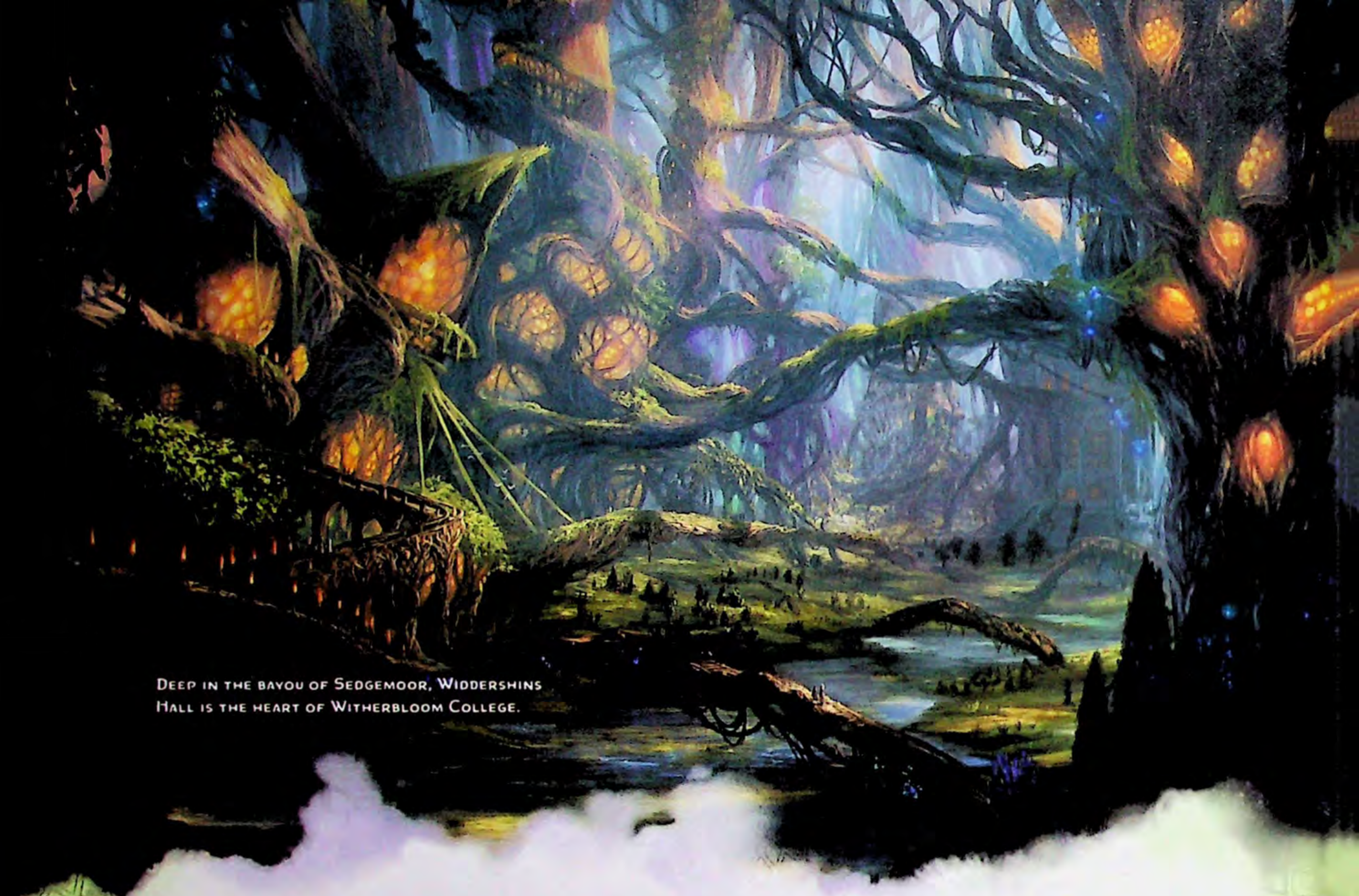
Lisette, Dean of the Root

Dean Lissette (neutral good human **Witherbloom professor of growth**) is a world-class healer and herbalist; it's even said she once cured the Lorehold founder dragon of a secret illness. Lisette's classes lean more toward demonstration and hands-on experience than lectures. When Lisette speaks, her words are soft and full of colorful metaphors.

Lisette believes in preserving nature and life, and she instills in her students a respect for all living things. While Dean Valentin's exploitation of living creatures disgusts her, she also knows she can use the results of his cruelty to help future lives.

Valentin, Dean of the Vein

Dean Valentin (neutral **vampire**) is ancient and drinks the blood of living creatures throughout the bayou. Valentin is a kind of sangromancer—he receives visions from the blood he consumes, which he uses to learn things about a creature or place. He has no qualms about exploiting the bayou's creatures for personal gain.



Deep in the bayou of Sedgemoor, Widdershins Hall is the heart of Witherbloom College.

Valentin's classes focus on dissection and decay. He and Dean Lisette often clash over his cavalier treatment of animals, but that hasn't stopped her from using his discoveries for her research.

Willowdusk, Essence Seer

No one knows how old Willowdusk (neutral good **treant**) really is. This professor of growth claims to be older than Strixhaven itself, and although many suspect that she exaggerates, no one else who has lived long enough to refute her cares to do so. Many years ago, a group of rebellious students got lost in Detention Bog and took shelter in what turned out to be Willowdusk's roots. She protected them from a pack of hungry groffs and shepherded them back to Widdershins Hall, offering a lecture on proper herb-gathering practices during the journey.

Her lessons proved so effective that she was asked to stay as a professor. She loves passing on her knowledge of medicinal herbs, pest mascot cultivation, and dissection techniques to generations of new students, and she almost always has a pot of tea brewing.

Tivash, Gloom Summoner

It's tough to study the secrets of life and death without getting your hands dirty—which is the first thing Tivash (neutral human **Witherbloom professor of decay**) teaches Witherbloom students. Some call the forces he manipulates evil, but he asserts that power is only as good or evil as how you use it.

Verelda Lang, Arcano-Biologist

Verelda Lang (chaotic neutral **dryad**) is a respected Witherbloom professor of growth who teaches introductory courses in magical physiologies, helping students in every college learn about the many unusual creatures they're likely to encounter, whatever the students' field of study. Her research extends to the vital functions of fractal creatures and other artificial life-forms, leading her to teach courses at Quandrix College as well.

Characters have multiple opportunities to study with Professor Lang in chapters 3 and 6.

ALAYNA DANNER

YEDORA, GRAVE GARDENER

Yedora (neutral **treant**) is the head groundskeeper and unofficial undertaker of Strixhaven. Students and graduates often wish to spend their afterlife at their beloved university, and she honors that wish. Each tree she plants represents the essence of a fallen mage, and she remembers them all by name.

GYOME, MASTER CHEF

Anyone who thinks a troll can't be a great chef has never met Gyome (neutral **troll**). He combines local ingredients with flavors from his homeland into an ever-changing menu of delicacies. Students from every college trek through Sedgemoor in droves for his food. The only complaint he ever receives is that he gives out unreasonably large portions.

WITHERBLOOM CAMPUS

Witherbloom's campus—shown on map 1.6—is tucked away in a wide bayou to the southeast of Strixhaven's central campus. Wiltroot Hall is described in chapter 4.

SEDGEMOOR

Sedgemoor, the bayou area that encompasses the Witherbloom campus, is known for a range of swamp creatures: bats, crocodilian monsters, zombified animals, lumbering beasts called brackish trudges, and canine creatures called groffs (brackish trudges and groffs are described in chapter 7). Sedgemoor is an excellent place to find pest mascots, herbs, spider silk, fungi, and other ingredients for potions and spells.

Characters have the opportunity to explore Sedgemoor in chapter 3.

WIDDERSHINS HALL

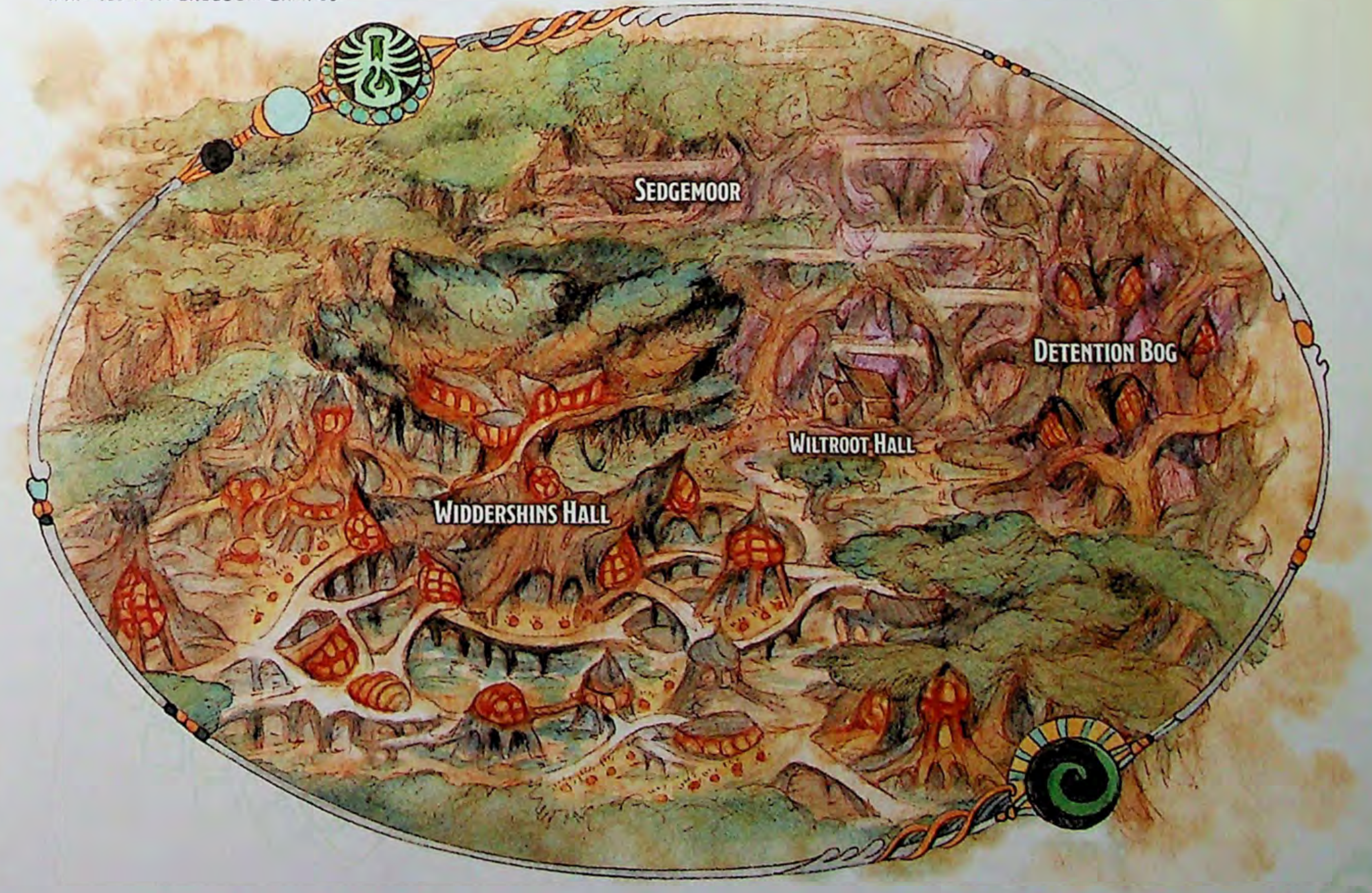
The center of the Witherbloom campus is Widdershins Hall, a bog mansion that looks like it grew out of Sedgemoor itself. Widdershins is a network of interconnected wooden pods, with planked walkways leading out of it like tendrils. The hall has a cozy inner chamber where students gather for classwork.

DETENTION BOG

A stinking, thoroughly unpleasant marshland lies adjacent to Sedgemoor: the Detention Bog. Witherbloom faculty members send misbehaving students to this bog as punishment, but it's also an excellent place to gather herbs for certain cures and curses.

The adventure presented in chapter 6 offers characters the opportunity to enter this bog.

MAP 1.6: WITHERBLOOM CAMPUS



FRANCESCA BAERALD

A group of Strixhaven students—each from a different college—descend into the depths below an ancient ruin.

CHAPTER 2

Character Options

THE CAMPUS OF STRIXHAVEN DRAWS A student body from across the world—or many worlds. With your DM's permission, you can create just about any Strixhaven character you can imagine, drawing on player character rules from the *Player's Handbook* and other D&D books. This chapter adds to that wealth of options with the material in the following sections:

"Race Option" presents the owlin, a character race option perfect for playing an owl-like student.

"Choosing a College" gives advice on building a character for adventuring in Strixhaven.

"Strixhaven Backgrounds" presents a background option for each Strixhaven college, linking a character to one of the five colleges.

"Feats" offers Strixhaven-themed feats for use with *A Curriculum of Chaos* and other adventures.

"Spells" reveals some spells that were developed at the university.

"Magic Items" collects magic items that Strixhaven students might acquire on their adventures.

Race Option

The owlin is a race option for player characters in Strixhaven and other D&D settings.

Creating Your Character

If you create an owlin character, follow these additional rules during character creation.

Ability Score Increases

When determining your character's ability scores, increase one of those scores by 2 and increase a different score by 1, or increase three different scores by 1. Follow this rule regardless of the method you use to determine the scores, such as rolling or point buy.

The "Quick Build" section for your character's class offers suggestions on which scores to increase. You're free to follow those suggestions or to ignore them. Whichever scores you decide to increase, none of the scores can be raised above 20.

Languages

Your character can speak, read, and write Common and one other language that you and your DM agree is appropriate for the character. The *Player's Handbook* offers a list of widespread languages to choose from. The DM is free to add or remove languages from that list for a particular campaign.

ZOLTAN BOROS

Creature Type

Every creature in D&D, including every player character, has a special tag in the rules that identifies the type of creature they are. Most player characters, including owlin, are of the Humanoid type. Creature types don't have rules themselves, but some rules in the game affect creatures of certain types in different ways. For example, the text of the *cure wounds* spell specifies that the spell doesn't work on a creature that has the Construct type.

Life Span

The typical life span of a player character in D&D is about a century, assuming the character doesn't meet a violent end on an adventure.

Height and Weight

Player characters, including owlin, typically fall into the same ranges of height and weight that humans have in our world. If you'd like to determine your character's height or weight randomly, consult the Random Height and Weight table in the *Player's Handbook*, and choose the row in the table that best represents the build you imagine for your character.

Owlin

Distant kin of giant owls from the Feywild, owlin come in many shapes and sizes, from petite and fluffy to wide-winged and majestic. Owlin have arms and legs like other Humanoids, as well as wings that extend from their back and shoulders.

Like owls, owlin are graced with feathers that make no sound when they move or fly, making it easy for them to sneak up on you in the library.

Your owlin character might be nocturnal. Or perhaps your character is simply prone to rise later, embodying the common nickname of night owl.

Owlin Traits

You have the following racial traits.

Creature Type. You are a Humanoid.

Size. You are Medium or Small. You choose the size when you select this race.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 120 feet of yourself as if it were bright light and in darkness as if it were dim light. You discern colors in that darkness only as shades of gray.

Owlin unleash magic in the sky above Strixhaven.

Johan Grenier

Flight. Thanks to your wings, you have a flying speed equal to your walking speed. You can't use this flying speed if you're wearing medium or heavy armor.

Silent Feathers. You have proficiency in the Stealth skill.

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

At Strixhaven, students choose their colleges at the start of their second year. But even during a character's first year, you make college-related decisions for your character, such as a background choice. From the start, your character is making decisions that will lead to their eventual college choice.

Chapter 1 describes each of the colleges. How do you decide which of these colleges is right for your character? Consider these approaches:

- Read the college descriptions in chapter 1, and choose the college that appeals to you.
- Read the descriptions of backgrounds and feats in this chapter. If one of them catches your eye, choose that college.
- If you have access to MAGIC: THE GATHERING cards from the Strixhaven set, find a card that appeals to you and build that character.

A STRIXHAVEN PARTY

If you're starting a Strixhaven campaign with the introductory adventure in chapter 3, that adventure gives all the advice you need to bring a party of characters together. The adventure assumes that the characters are first-year students who are participating in orientation activities together.

If you start the campaign at higher level, using one of the adventures in later chapters of this book (or an adventure of your DM's creation), give some thought to what has brought your characters together as a group. The easiest explanation is that you met as first-year students, perhaps living in the same residence hall or taking the same classes, or united by a common extracurricular interest.

It's also possible that your characters are just meeting for the first time. The events of the adventure might throw you together more or less at random. You could all be taking the same class, you might be working the same campus job, or you could be introduced by mutual friends.

STRIXHAVEN BACKGROUNDS

This section presents five backgrounds that you can choose to reflect your character's studies preparing to enter one of Strixhaven's colleges. You aren't limited to these backgrounds in a Strixhaven campaign; they're just one way you can choose to dive deeply into your character's college affiliation.

If you do choose one of these backgrounds, you can assume that your life to this point has been consumed by the education that has made enrolling at Strixhaven possible for you, and you might not have much experience of the world beyond that preparatory work. You're ready to excel as a student—and that, in turn, will prepare you to excel at whatever path comes after graduation.

LOREHOLD STUDENT

You have spent your youth preparing to be a student of Lorehold College, reading every book on the college's recommended reading list for prospective students. Your academic passions are in the broad field of history. You might dream of using magic to contact great historical figures or your own ancestors or of recreating the mighty magic of a distant age.

Skill Proficiencies: History, Religion
Languages: Two of your choice
Equipment: A bottle of black ink, an ink pen, a hammer, a hooded lantern, a tinderbox, a tome of history, a school uniform, and a pouch containing 15 gp

FEATURE: LOREHOLD INITIATE

You gain the Strixhaven Initiate feat (presented later in the chapter) and must choose Lorehold within it.

In addition, if you have the Spellcasting or Pact Magic feature, the spells on the Lorehold Spells table are added to the spell list of your spellcasting class. (If you are a multiclass character with multiple spell lists, these spells are added to all of them.)

LOREHOLD SPELLS

Spell Level	Spells
1st	*Comprehend Languages*, *Identify*
2nd	*Borrowed Knowledge* (in this book), *Locate Object*
3rd	*Speak with Dead*, *Spirit Guardians*
4th	*Arcane Eye*, *Stone Shape*
5th	*Flame Strike*, *Legend Lore*

Consider customizing how your spells look when you cast them. Your Lorehold spells might create displays of golden light. You might use a tome or a scroll as a spellcasting focus, and your spell effects might reflect the appearance of the reference books you study.

BUILDING A LOREHOLD CHARACTER

Any class or subclass that deals with knowledge of the past can be a good fit in Lorehold. Bards thrive in Lorehold, and wizards (particularly those of the School of Divination) are numerous among its students. Clerics (often with the Knowledge or Light domains) are also quite common.

For a more unusual take on a Lorehold student, you could consider playing a barbarian with a primal connection to the past (perhaps adopting the Path of the Ancestral Guardian from *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*) or a paladin whose Oath of the Ancients gives a concrete link to history.

Suggested Characteristics. Methodical historians and daring adventurers alike can be found among the ranks of Lorehold college. The Lorehold Personality Traits table suggests a variety of traits you might adopt for your character.

LOREHOLD PERSONALITY TRAITS

d6	Personality Trait
1	I thrive on esoteric lore. The more obscure the historical references I can include in everyday conversation, the better.
2	By searching for these lost artifacts, I hope to find who I really am along the way.
3	I can barely go a minute without talking about my research. I have so much knowledge in my head, and it needs to be let out somewhere!
4	The spirits of the dead are so much more interesting to talk with than living classmates.
5	I can speak eloquently about the historical ramifications of an ancient war. But ask me to add two-digit numbers together, and I'm a mess.
6	In the end, it's all just entropy. Everything falls apart someday.

Lorehold Trinkets. When you make your character, you may roll once on the Lorehold Trinkets table, instead of on the Trinkets table in the *Player's Handbook*, for your starting trinket.

LOREHOLD TRINKETS

d6	Trinket
1	A map made of concentric circles that can be rotated around the page
2	A puzzle box bedecked with amber
3	A dented brass compass with a red needle
4	The head of a broken statue that houses the consciousness of a snarky sage
5	A sheet of parchment embossed with tactile lettering, glowing red
6	A broken dagger with a wavy blade and a serpentine hilt

An advanced Prismari student artfully harnesses fire.

SEAN SEVESTRE

Prismari Student

You are an artist, and you have been preparing to hone your craft according to the traditions of Prismari College. Whatever your medium—sculpture, dance, paint, music, drama, architecture, or any other field—you have grand visions of bringing your art to life in a fusion of magic and creativity.

Skill Proficiencies: Acrobatics, Performance
Tool Proficiencies: One type of musical instrument or artisan's tools
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: A bottle of black ink, an ink pen, a set of artisan's tools or a musical instrument (one of your choice), a school uniform, and a pouch containing 10 gp

Feature: Prismari Initiate

You gain the Strixhaven Initiate feat (presented later in the chapter) and must choose Prismari within it.

In addition, if you have the Spellcasting or Pact Magic feature, the spells on the Prismari Spells table are added to the spell list of your spellcasting class. (If you are a multiclass character with multiple spell lists, these spells are added to all of them.)

Prismari Spells

Spell Level	Spells
1st	*Chromatic Orb, Thunderwave*
2nd	*Flaming Sphere, Kinetic Jaunt* (in this book)
3rd	*Haste, Water Walk*
4th	*Freedom of Movement, Wall of Fire*
5th	*Cone of Cold, Conjure Elemental*

Consider customizing how your spells look when you cast them. You might wield your Prismari spells with dynamic, gestural movement—as much dance as somatic component. Even a blast of fire in your hands is a sculpted work of art; elemental forces make grand designs as you hurl spells. These forces might linger on your body or in your clothes as decorative elements after your spells are dissipated, as sparks dance in your hair and your touch leaves tracings of frost on whatever you touch.

Building a Prismari Character

Any class or subclass that wields elemental forces of cold, fire, lightning, and wind can be a good fit in Prismari. Druids and sorcerers are common in Prismari, and wizards who study the Schools of Evocation or Transmutation are also well represented.

Clerics aren't very common in this school, but some with the Tempest domain end up here.

Beyond the ranks of traditional spellcasters, Lorehold students also include monks who follow the Way of the Four Elements. Some acrobatic rogues and fighters (including those who emulate the archetype of the Eldritch Knight) also delight in the athleticism of Prismari performance.

Suggested Characteristics. Though the curriculum of Prismari College attracts many outgoing and driven artists, the school has no shortage of shy scholars and lackadaisical blowhards among its ranks. The Prismari Personality Traits table suggests a variety of traits you might adopt for your character.

PRISMARI PERSONALITY TRAITS

d6	Personality Trait
1	I'm the life of the party, and I expect everyone's attention when I walk into a room.
2	Two weeks ago, I was enthralled with my latest project. Now, I think it's garbage and deserves to be destroyed.
3	I believe everyone has the ability to express their truest selves through art, and I'm happy to quietly push them in the right direction.
4	Everyone is a critic, and I work to win them all over.
5	I'm beset with such an overwhelming sense of ennui regarding my art. Nothing quite captures my attention anymore.
6	Instead of confronting my negative emotions, I channel them into explosive artistic displays.

Prismari Trinkets. When you make your character, you may roll once on the Prismari Trinkets table, instead of on the Trinkets table in the *Player's Handbook*, for your starting trinket.

PRISMARI TRINKETS

d6	Trinket
1	A pair of rose-tinted glasses with glittery frames
2	A stoppered glass bottle that, when opened, plays a brassy orchestral piece
3	A quartet of hovering water motes in a vial
4	A bandolier of watercolor paints
5	A tiara capped with a crystal that crackles with harmless lightning
6	An iridescent quill

QUANDRIX STUDENT

In preparation to become a student of Quandrix College, you have spent years working through the college's math problems for prospective students. Your interests concentrate on the mathematical principles and patterns found in the natural world. You might lean more toward mathematics or physics, or you delve into more abstract studies of metaphysics, arcana, or logic.

Skill Proficiencies: Arcana, Nature
Tool Proficiencies: One type of artisan's tools
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: A bottle of black ink, an ink pen, an abacus, a book of arcane theory, a school uniform, and a pouch containing 15 gp

FEATURE: QUANDRIX INITIATE

You gain the Strixhaven Initiate feat (presented later in the chapter) and must choose Quandrix within it.

In addition, if you have the Spellcasting or Pact Magic feature, the spells on the Quandrix Spells table are added to the spell list of your spellcasting class. (If you are a multiclass character with multiple spell lists, these spells are added to all of them.)

QUANDRIX SPELLS

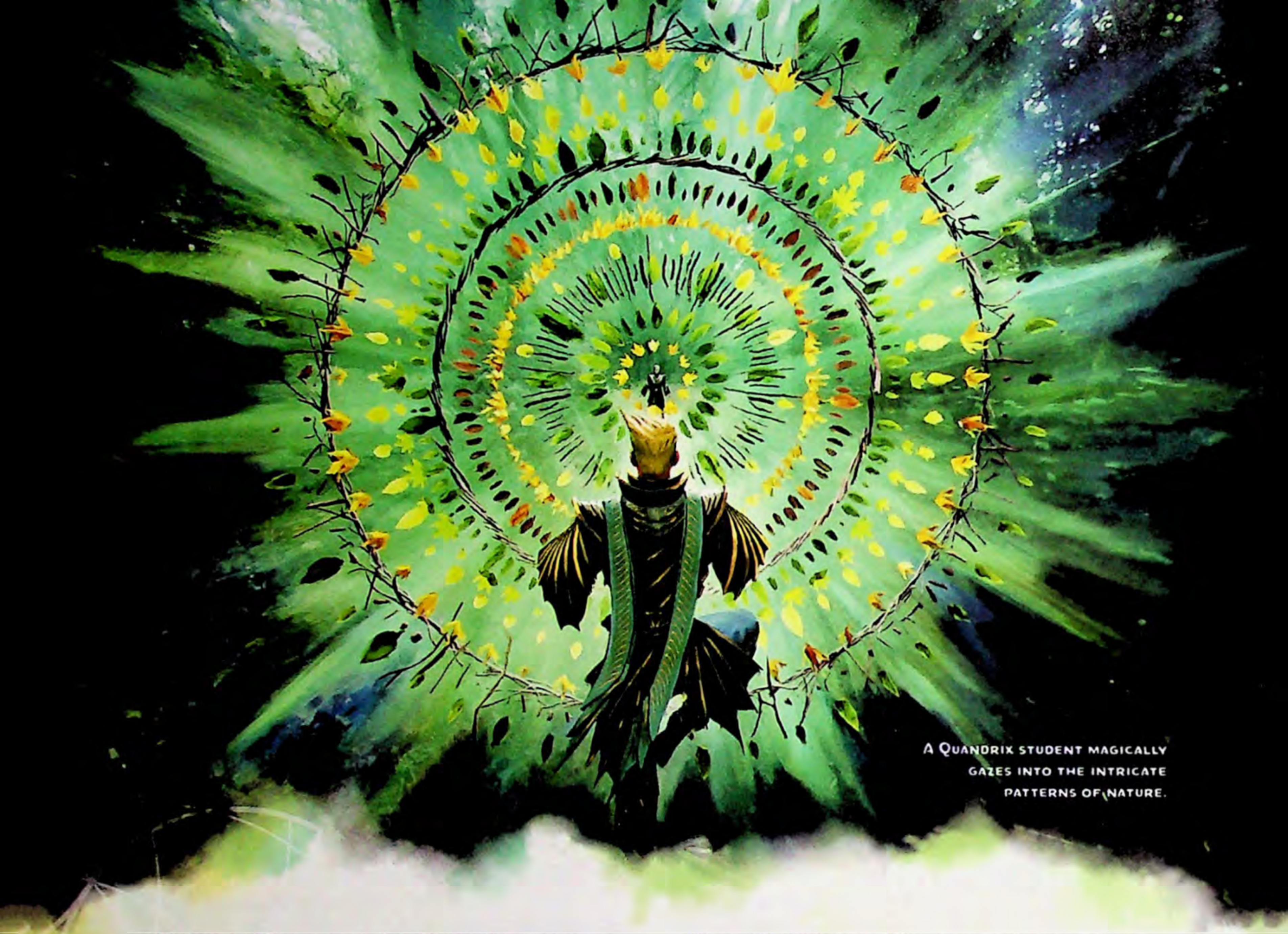
Spell Level	Spells
1st	*Entangle, Guiding Bolt*
2nd	*Enlarge/Reduce, Vortex Warp* (in this book)
3rd	*Aura of Vitality, Haste*
4th	*Control Water, Freedom of Movement*
5th	*Circle of Power, Passwall*

Consider customizing how your spells look when you cast them. Your Quandrix spells might manifest amid kaleidoscopic swirls of fractal patterns, amplifying the tiniest movements of your somatic components. When your magic creates or alters creatures, it might briefly surround the targets with shimmering fractal designs or tessellated patterns.

BUILDING A QUANDRIX CHARACTER

Any spellcasting class or subclass can work well for a Quandrix character. Both the scholarly focus of wizards (especially those who study the Schools of Abjuration, Illusion, or Transmutation) and the metamagic manipulations of sorcerers are welcome in Quandrix, and many druids explore the patterns of nature in Quandrix as well. A few clerics, particularly those with the Knowledge or Nature domains, study in Quandrix as well.

Aside from traditional spellcasters, a few characters of other classes find homes in Quandrix. Some fighters, monks, rangers, and rogues study here, using Quandrix principles to train their minds.


A QUANDRIX STUDENT MAGICALLY GAZES INTO THE INTRICATE PATTERNS OF NATURE.

CRISTI BALANESCU

Suggested Characteristics. With subjects ranging from the physical and tangible to the paradoxical and strange, the student body of Quandrix College includes an eclectic mix of individuals. The Quandrix Personality Traits table suggests a variety of traits you might adopt for your character.

QUANDRIX PERSONALITY TRAITS

d6	Personality Trait
1	When I find a subject I'm interested in, I won't stop studying until I know everything about it. It keeps me up at night.
2	I hope this all makes sense to me one day. Until then, I'm going to keep faking it.
3	Equations and patterns come naturally to my mind. I wish friendship came just as easily.
4	I believe I'm always the smartest person in the room. And I'll prove it, even if no one asks me to.
5	If these classes have taught me anything, it's that reality is a lie, and nothing matters. So why bother?
6	Before I graduate, I want to achieve something mathematically impossible. I must leave a legacy!

Quandrix Trinkets. When you make your character, you may roll once on the Quandrix Trinkets table, instead of on the Trinkets table in the *Player's Handbook*, for your starting trinket.

QUANDRIX TRINKETS

d6	Trinket
1	A small succulent in a dodecahedral clay pot
2	A blue knit hat that looks a bit like a bottle folding in on itself
3	A model hypercube carved from green crystal, showcasing the fourth dimension
4	A crumpled test on the theory of gravity manipulation, with a failing grade on the front and the name of a famous Quandrix professor
5	A blue tetrahedron that, when tapped twice, projects a recording of an old mathematics lecture
6	A round bread roll cut so that someone could spread butter on both halves without ever lifting the knife

SILVERQUILL STUDENT

You have spent years practicing your writing and oration in the hope of becoming a student of Silverquill College. Your studies focus on language, literature, and the power of words, both magical and otherwise. The metaphorical power of words to illuminate or conceal is joined with the literal ability of magic to do the same in your academic pursuits.

Skill Proficiencies: Intimidation, Persuasion
Languages: Two of your choice
Equipment: A bottle of black ink, an ink pen, a book of poetry, a school uniform, and a pouch containing 15 gp

FEATURE: SILVERQUILL INITIATE

You gain the Strixhaven Initiate feat (presented later in the chapter) and must choose Silverquill within it.

In addition, if you have the Spellcasting or Pact Magic feature, the spells on the Silverquill Spells table are added to the spell list of your spellcasting class. (If you are a multiclass character with multiple spell lists, these spells are added to all of them.)

SILVERQUILL SPELLS

Spell Level	Spells
1st	*Dissonant Whispers*, *Silvery Barbs* (in this book)
2nd	*Calm Emotions*, *Darkness*
3rd	*Beacon of Hope*, *Daylight*
4th	*Compulsion*, *Confusion*
5th	*Dominate Person*, *Rary's Telepathic Bond*

Consider customizing how your spells look when you cast them. Your Silverquill spells might be accompanied by visual effects resembling splotches of ink or radiating ripples of golden light. Any auditory effects of your spells often sound like amplified echoes of your own voice speaking the spells' verbal components—even amid the crash of lightning or a fiery eruption.

BUILDING A SILVERQUILL CHARACTER

Many bards find a home in Silverquill, putting the power of their voices to use with Silverquill magic. Wizards (especially those who study the Schools of Illusion and Enchantment) are common in Silverquill, as are warlocks. Clerics with the Divine Domains of Light and Trickery also fit in well among the mages of Silverquill.

A number of both paladins and rogues attend Silverquill College as well, highlighting the diversity of the student body.

Suggested Characteristics. With the college's intense standards looming over them, Silverquill students range from cocky and cutthroat to overwhelmed perfectionists. The Silverquill Personality Traits table suggests a variety of traits you might adopt for your character.

SILVERQUILL PERSONALITY TRAITS

d6	Personality Trait
1	I'll say whatever I need to in order to maintain my high social status.
2	I prefer saying the blunt truth over a pretty lie, and I don't particularly care whose feelings I hurt.
3	I believe that uplifting my peers is the best way to succeed.
4	I've mastered the art of using humor as a defense, and I always have a charming joke ready.
5	I always wait before speaking, analyzing the situation for whichever angle is most advantageous to my goals.
6	No one knows about the all-nighters I've pulled to keep my magic looking effortless, and I'm going to keep it that way.

Silverquill Trinkets. When you make your character, you may roll once on the Silverquill Trinkets table, instead of on the Trinkets table in the *Player's Handbook*, for your starting trinket.

SILVERQUILL TRINKETS

d6	Trinket
1	A black leather notebook filled with half-finished poems
2	A set of flashcards detailing different colloquialisms and their meanings
3	A canteen that makes any liquid drunk from it taste sweet
4	A forged permission slip granting access to the special archives of Strixhaven's libraries
5	A stylish silver pin that references a famous series of novels about warlocks
6	A stack of small pieces of parchment, each enchanted to stick to whatever surface it's pressed against and peel off easily

WITHERBLOOM STUDENT

You filled your childhood with rudimentary alchemical experiments, all in the hope of becoming a student of Witherbloom College. The life sciences are the focus of your reading, which include biology and necromancy. Brewing strange concoctions with medicinal properties, exploring the anatomies of monsters, and cataloging swamp flora are the kinds of studies you might pursue at Witherbloom College.

Skill Proficiencies: Nature, Survival
Tool Proficiencies: Herbalism kit
Languages: One of your choice
Equipment: A bottle of black ink, an ink pen, a book about plant identification, an iron pot, an herbalism kit, a school uniform, and a pouch containing 15 gp

FEATURE: WITHERBLOOM INITIATE

You gain the Strixhaven Initiate feat (presented later in the chapter) and must choose Witherbloom within it.

In addition, if you have the Spellcasting or Pact Magic feature, the spells on the Witherbloom Spells table are added to the spell list of your spellcasting class. (If you are a multiclass character with multiple spell lists, these spells are added to all of them.)

WITHERBLOOM SPELLS

Spell Level	Spells
1st	*Cure Wounds, Inflict Wounds*
2nd	*Lesser Restoration,* *Wither and Bloom* (in this book)
3rd	*Revivify, Vampiric Touch*
4th	*Blight, Death Ward*
5th	*Antilife Shell, Greater Restoration*

Consider customizing how your spells look when you cast them. Your Witherbloom spells might rely on material components or a spellcasting focus drawn from the swamp environment of Witherbloom, and your spells might take on an appearance suggesting those natural elements. Spectral shapes of swamp animals or plants might form amid your spell effects.

BUILDING A WITHERBLOOM CHARACTER

Druids and warlocks make up most of Witherbloom's student body. A few wizards (mostly those who study the School of Necromancy) and clerics (including those with the Divine Domains of Life or Nature) also find their home in Witherbloom.

A number of rangers and barbarians study at Witherbloom as well, and some rogues learn how to create and use poisons during their studies at this college.

Suggested Characteristics. Students of Witherbloom College are equally likely to be found picking herbs for a healing tincture or riding zombified swamp beasts through the bayou. The Witherbloom Personality Traits table suggests a variety of traits you might adopt for your character.

WITHERBLOOM PERSONALITY TRAITS

d6	Personality Trait
1	I love brewing up a new recipe, even if some might be repulsed by my choice of ingredients. Or the final product. Or both.
2	My fashion sense is like my garden: withered, black, and weird.
3	I'm going to befriend every single monster in this swamp if it's the last thing I do.
4	Everything in this world dies eventually. The question is, what will you do with the time you have left?
5	I know we just met, but when you die, may I have your bones? For research.
6	Don't interrupt me; I'm brooding.

Witherbloom Trinkets. When you make your character, you may roll once on the Witherbloom Trinkets table, instead of on the Trinkets table in the *Player's Handbook*, for your starting trinket.

WITHERBLOOM TRINKETS

d6	Trinket
1	A black bird-shaped mask, trimmed with glowing green thread
2	A set of rabbit bones
3	A pair of thick knee-high waders, stained with muck and moss
4	A slimy green tentacle, which occasionally wriggles
5	A notebook containing waterproof paper
6	A necklace of five small vials, each filled with luminescent white liquid

FEATS

This section introduces feats that give your character benefits associated with the colleges of Strixhaven. These feats are available to you whenever you normally choose a feat, and they follow the feat rules in the *Player's Handbook*.

FEAT DESCRIPTIONS

These feats are presented in alphabetical order.

STRIXHAVEN INITIATE

You have studied some magical theory and have learned a few spells associated with Strixhaven University.

Choose one of Strixhaven's colleges: Lorehold, Prismari, Quandrix, Silverquill, or Witherbloom. You learn two cantrips and one 1st-level spell based on the college you choose, as specified in the Strixhaven Spells table.

You can cast the chosen 1st-level spell without a spell slot, and you must finish a long rest before you can cast it in this way again. You can also cast the spell using any spell slots you have.

Your spellcasting ability for this feat's spells is Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma (choose when you select this feat).

STRIXHAVEN SPELLS

College	Cantrips	1st-Level Spell
Lorehold	Choose two from *light*, *sacred flame*, and *thaumaturgy*.	Choose one 1st-level cleric or wizard spell.
Prismari	Choose two from *fire bolt*, *prestidigitation*, and *ray of frost*.	Choose one 1st-level bard or sorcerer spell.
Quandrix	Choose two from *druidcraft*, *guidance*, and *mage hand*.	Choose one 1st-level druid or wizard spell.
Silverquill	Choose two from *sacred flame*, *thaumaturgy*, and *vicious mockery*.	Choose one 1st-level bard or cleric spell.
Witherbloom	Choose two from *chill touch*, *druidcraft*, and *spare the dying*.	Choose one 1st-level druid or wizard spell.

STRIXHAVEN MASCOT

Prerequisite: 4th Level, Strixhaven Initiate Feat

You have learned how to summon a Strixhaven mascot to assist you, granting you these benefits:

- You can cast the *find familiar* spell as a ritual. Your familiar can take the form of the mascot associated with the college you chose for the Strixhaven Initiate feat: a **spirit statue mascot** (Lorehold), an **art elemental mascot** (Prismari), a **fractal mascot** (Quandrix), an **inkling mascot** (Silverquill), or a **pest mascot** (Witherbloom). Stat blocks for these creatures appear in chapter 7.
- When you take the Attack action on your turn, you can forgo one attack to allow your mascot familiar to make one attack of its own with its reaction.
- If your mascot familiar is within 60 feet of you, you can teleport as an action, swapping places with the familiar. If your destination space is too small for you to occupy, the teleportation fails and is wasted. Once you teleport in this way, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest, unless you expend a spell slot of 2nd level or higher to do it again.

SPELLS

Created at Strixhaven, the spells presented in this section are available to the backgrounds offered in this chapter. The spells also appear on the class spell lists indicated in the Spells table below.

SPELLS

Level	Spell	School	Class
1st	*Silvery Barbs*	Enchantment	Bard, Sorcerer, Wizard
2nd	*Borrowed Knowledge*	Divination	Bard, Cleric, Warlock, Wizard
2nd	*Kinetic Jaunt*	Transmutation	Artificer,* Bard, Sorcerer, Wizard
2nd	*Vortex Warp*	Conjuration	Artificer,* Sorcerer, Wizard
2nd	*Wither and Bloom*	Necromancy	Druid, Sorcerer, Wizard

*The artificer class appears in *Tasha's Cauldron of Everything* and *Eberron: Rising from the Last War.*

SPELL DESCRIPTIONS

These spells are presented in alphabetical order.

BORROWED KNOWLEDGE

2nd-Level Divination

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Self
Components: V, S, M (a book worth at least 25 gp)
Duration: 1 hour

You draw on knowledge from spirits of the past. Choose one skill in which you lack proficiency. For the spell's duration, you have proficiency in the chosen skill. The spell ends early if you cast it again.

KINETIC JAUNT

2nd-Level Transmutation

Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 minute

You magically empower your movement with dance-like steps, giving yourself the following benefits for the duration:

- Your walking speed increases by 10 feet.
- You don't provoke opportunity attacks.
- You can move through the space of another creature, and it doesn't count as difficult terrain. If you end your turn in another creature's space, you are shunted to the last unoccupied space you occupied, and you take 1d8 force damage.

SILVERY BARBS

1st-Level Enchantment

Casting Time: 1 reaction, which you take when a creature you can see within 60 feet of yourself succeeds on an attack roll, an ability check, or a saving throw
Range: 60 feet
Components: V
Duration: Instantaneous

You magically distract the triggering creature and turn its momentary uncertainty into encouragement for another creature. The triggering creature must reroll the d20 and use the lower roll.

You can then choose a different creature you can see within range (you can choose yourself). The chosen creature has advantage on the next attack roll, ability check, or saving throw it makes within 1 minute. A creature can be empowered by only one use of this spell at a time.

VORTEX WARP

2nd-Level Conjuration

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 90 feet
Components: V, S
Duration: Instantaneous

You magically twist space around another creature you can see within range. The target must succeed on a Constitution saving throw (the target can choose to fail), or the target is teleported to an unoccupied space of your choice that you can see within range. The chosen space must be on a surface or in a liquid that can support the target without the target having to squeeze.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the range of the spell increases by 30 feet for each slot level above 2nd.

WITHER AND BLOOM

2nd-Level Necromancy

Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 60 feet
Components: V, S, M (a withered vine twisted into a loop)
Duration: Instantaneous

You invoke both death and life upon a 10-foot-radius sphere centered on a point within range. Each creature of your choice in that area must make a Constitution saving throw, taking 2d6 necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Nonmagical vegetation in that area withers.

In addition, one creature of your choice in that area can spend and roll one of its unspent Hit Dice and regain a number of hit points equal to the roll plus your spellcasting ability modifier.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the damage increases by 1d6 for each slot above 2nd, and the number of Hit Dice that can be spent and added to the healing roll increases by one for each slot above 2nd.

MAGIC ITEMS

This section presents some magic items that are created at Strixhaven. These items, along with a few from the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (*DMG*), can be purchased on campus using the prices in the Magic Items for Sale table.

MAGIC ITEMS FOR SALE

Item	Rarity	Cost
Bottle of Boundless Coffee	Common	100 gp
Cuddly Strixhaven Mascot	Common	100 gp
Lorehold Primer	Uncommon	300 gp
Prismari Primer	Uncommon	300 gp
Quandrix Primer	Uncommon	300 gp
Silverquill Primer	Uncommon	300 gp
Spell Scroll (1st-Level Spell; *DMG*)	Common	50 gp
Strixhaven Pennant	Common	100 gp
Weapon, +1 (*DMG*)	Uncommon	300 gp
Witherbloom Primer	Uncommon	300 gp

MAGIC ITEM DESCRIPTIONS

These items are presented in alphabetical order.

BOTTLE OF BOUNDLESS COFFEE

Wondrous Item, Common

This metal bottle carries delicious, warm coffee. The bottle comes with a stopper, which is attached to the bottle by a little chain. Even when open, the bottle won't accept any liquid other than the coffee it produces. The coffee inside is always comfortably warm, and none of the heat can be felt through the bottle.

Each time you drink the coffee, roll a d20. On a 1, the bottle refuses to dispense coffee for the next hour. If you pour coffee from the bottle, rather than drinking from it, the coffee vanishes the moment it leaves the bottle.

CUDDLY STRIXHAVEN MASCOT

Wondrous Item, Common

Representing one of the mascots of Strixhaven, this soft, Tiny, magic toy is perfect for cuddling. If you press it to your arm, shoulder, or leg as an action, the toy stays attached there for 1 hour or until you use an action to remove it.

This toy can also be used to fight off fear. When you make a saving throw to avoid or end the frightened condition on yourself, you can give yourself advantage on the roll if the toy is on your person. You must decide to do so before rolling the d20. If the save succeeds, you can't use the toy in this way again until you finish a long rest.

LOREHOLD PRIMER

Wondrous Item, Uncommon (Requires Attunement by a Spellcaster)

The *Lorehold Primer* is a magic textbook created at Strixhaven's Lorehold College. The primer has 3 charges, and it regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn. If you make an Intelligence (History) or an Intelligence (Religion) check while holding the primer, you can expend 1 charge to give yourself a 1d4 bonus to the check, immediately after you roll the d20.

In addition, if you study the primer at the end of a long rest, you can choose one 1st-level spell from the cleric or wizard spell list. Before you finish your next long rest, you can cast the chosen spell once without a spell slot if you are holding the primer. Your spellcasting ability for this spell is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

PRISMARI PRIMER

Wondrous Item, Uncommon (Requires Attunement by a Spellcaster)

The *Prismari Primer* is a magic textbook created at Strixhaven's Prismari College. The primer has 3 charges, and it regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn. If you make a Dexterity (Acrobatics) or a Charisma (Performance) check while holding the primer, you can expend 1 charge to give yourself a 1d4 bonus to the check, immediately after you roll the d20.

In addition, if you study the primer at the end of a long rest, you can choose one 1st-level spell from the bard or sorcerer spell list. Before you finish your next long rest, you can cast the chosen spell once without a spell slot if you are holding the primer. Your spellcasting ability for this spell is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

QUANDRIX PRIMER

Wondrous Item, Uncommon (Requires Attunement by a Spellcaster)

The *Quandrix Primer* is a magic textbook created at Strixhaven's Quandrix College. The primer has 3 charges, and it regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn. If you make an Intelligence (Arcana) or an Intelligence (Nature) check while holding the primer, you can expend 1 charge to give yourself a 1d4 bonus to the check, immediately after you roll the d20.

In addition, if you study the primer at the end of a long rest, you can choose one 1st-level spell from the druid or wizard spell list. Before you finish your next long rest, you can cast the chosen spell once without a spell slot if you are holding the primer. Your spellcasting ability for this spell is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

SILVERQUILL PRIMER

Wondrous Item, Uncommon (Requires Attunement by a Spellcaster)

The *Silverquill Primer* is a magic textbook created at Strixhaven's Silverquill College. The primer has 3 charges, and it regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn. If you make a Charisma (Intimidation) or a Charisma (Persuasion) check while holding the primer, you can expend 1 charge to give yourself a 1d4 bonus to the check, immediately after you roll the d20.

In addition, if you study the primer at the end of a long rest, you can choose one 1st-level spell from the bard or cleric spell list. Before you finish your next long rest, you can cast the chosen spell once without a spell slot if you are holding the primer. Your spellcasting ability for this spell is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

STRIXHAVEN PENNANT

Wondrous Item, Common

This magic pennant bears the symbol of Strixhaven or one of its colleges: Lorehold, Prismari, Quandrix, Silverquill, or Witherbloom. While you wave the pennant, the symbol on it glitters, and the pennant sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

WITHERBLOOM PRIMER

Wondrous Item, Uncommon (Requires Attunement by a Spellcaster)

The *Witherbloom Primer* is a magic textbook created at Strixhaven's Witherbloom College. The primer has 3 charges, and it regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn. If you make an Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check while holding the primer, you can expend 1 charge to give yourself a 1d4 bonus to the check, immediately after you roll the d20.

In addition, if you study the primer at the end of a long rest, you can choose one 1st-level spell from the druid or wizard spell list. Before you finish your next long rest, you can cast the chosen spell once without a spell slot if you are holding the primer. Your spellcasting ability for this spell is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

Strixhaven students are often in awe of their surroundings at the famed university of magic.

CHAPTER 3

SCHOOL IS IN SESSION

THE FOLLOWING FOUR CHAPTERS PRESENT a series of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS adventures optimized for four to six characters. Each adventure takes place on and around the Strixhaven campus. In these adventures, the player characters are students attending the university, and they become heroes in their own right as they navigate plots, overcome monsters, and thwart dangers that arise in each adventure.

Chapters 1 and 2 contain all the information the players need to play Strixhaven students. Each adventure takes place over the course of one academic year. For instance, "Campus Kerfuffle," the adventure in this chapter, takes place during the characters' first year at the university. "Hunt for Mage Tower," in chapter 4, takes place during the characters' second year at the university, and so on. The adventures can be run consecutively as a campaign or individually, as described below.

RUNNING THE ADVENTURES

To run these adventures, you need the fifth edition core rulebooks: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

> Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under a specific circumstance, as described in the text.

When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block. In other words, when you see a name in bold type, you should get the creature's stat block ready because you're going to need it soon. If the stat block appears in chapter 7, the text tells you. Otherwise, you can find the stat block in the *Monster Manual*.

Spells and equipment mentioned in these adventures are described in the *Player's Handbook*. If an adventure doesn't describe a magic item, you can find the magic item's description in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

A STRIXHAVEN CAMPAIGN

If you run these adventures as a campaign, one villain is behind the chaos on campus: the bullywug Murgaxor Grenshel, a disgruntled former student who attended Strixhaven centuries ago. Murgaxor—who uses evil magic to sustain his life force—focuses his all-consuming desire for revenge on destroying Strixhaven University.

The adventures assume you're playing a Strixhaven campaign, and each adventure provides information about how Murgaxor's influence corrupts and warps creatures and places on campus. The end of each adventure provides information that foreshadows or sets up the events of the next adventure. The characters ultimately confront Murgaxor in chapter 6, where the villain is described in detail.

CHARACTER CREATION

Before starting any of this book's adventures, consult chapter 2 for guidance on making Strixhaven characters and uniting those characters in a group.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

In these adventures, the characters receive experience points for achieving story milestones, rather than for defeating monsters. Each adventure tells you when the characters advance to the next level.

STANDALONE ADVENTURES

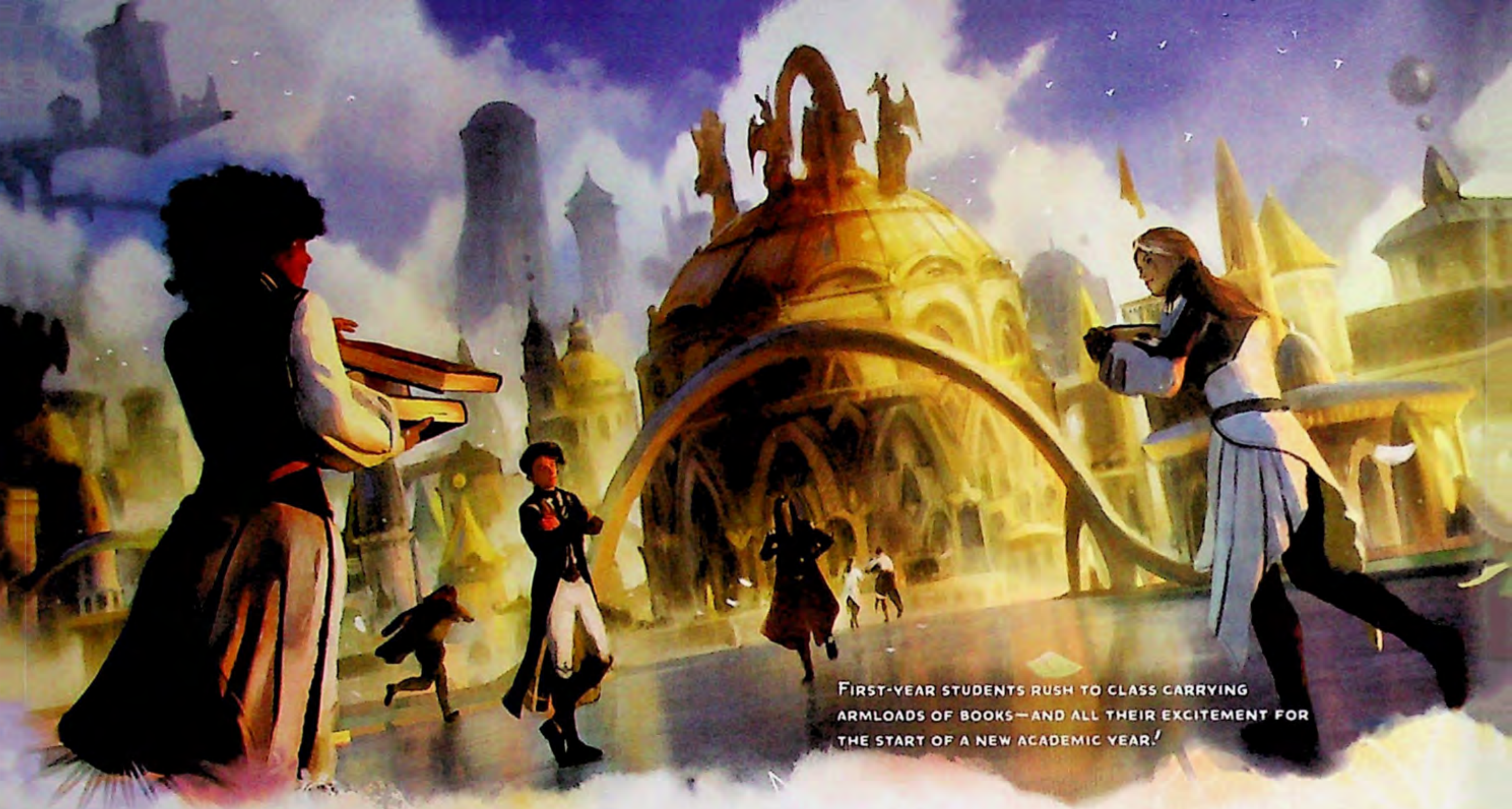
Rather than playing the four adventures as a campaign, you can run them as standalone adventures. A section near the start of each adventure tells you how to use the adventure in this way.

If you run any of these adventures separately, you should ask the players to create characters of the appropriate starting level for the adventure, as shown in the Adventure Levels table.

ADVENTURE LEVELS

Adventure	Starting Level	Chapter
Campus Kerfuffle	1st	3
Hunt for Mage Tower	4th	4
The Magister's Masquerade	6th	5
A Reckoning in Ruins	8th	6

CAROLINE CARBIA



First-year students rush to class carrying armloads of books—and all their excitement for the start of a new academic year.

Relationships

If you run chapter 4, 5, or 6 as a standalone adventure, you should ask each player to choose at least one student to be a Friend, a Beloved, or a Rival, as described in the Relationship rules later in this chapter. The Starting Relationship Points table lists the number of points a character has at the start with the chosen Friend, Beloved, or Rival.

Starting Relationship Points

Person	Relationship Points
Friend	2
Beloved	3
Rival	–2

Using the Maps

This book contains a number of interior maps and is accompanied by a poster map, all of which will aid you as you run these adventures.

Interior Maps

Maps in the book primarily depict areas for the characters to explore or areas where combat is likely to occur. These maps are designed to be easily reproduced on graph paper, a wet-erase mat, or some other surface to help the players visualize locations and devise combat strategies. You can alter a map's features as you see fit.

On interior maps, an arrow on a slope or staircase points in the ascending direction. When elevation numbers appear on a map, a plus sign indicates a rise of the indicated number of feet, while a minus sign indicates a depression.

Poster Map

The poster map is meant to be shared with the players. One side shows the Strixhaven University campus, with a focus on the central campus and the five surrounding colleges. The other side of the poster shows detailed maps of key campus locations, some of which the characters visit in multiple adventures.

The Passage of Time

Each adventure in this book takes place over the course of an academic year, which is no longer than a calendar year. The adventures include events, but those events aren't the entire extent of the characters' experience on campus that year. Unless explicitly stated, assume that anywhere from a few days to a few weeks passes between the events of an adventure. You can decide how quickly the year passes and work with your players to decide what else they get up to. You can conduct roleplaying scenes with the characters' fellow students, taking into account their Friends, Rivals, and Beloveds. You might also narratively describe developments in their courses to help the academic year feel varied and robust.

Finally, as the characters are completing tasks together for their courses or hanging out with their fellow students, consider challenging them with random monster encounters that crop up on campus. These encounters might be truly random, or they could be unexpected side-effects of the more significant events unfolding in the adventure. Each chapter includes a table tailored for that adventure.

Paul Scott Canavan

STRIXHAVEN TRACKING SHEET

The sections on the following pages give special rules for certain aspects of university life. Players can use the sheet below to keep track of the effects of those rules on their characters. Each player should have a copy to use during the course of the adventures. The tracking sheet includes the following parts:

Relationships. The player notes here the names of each student NPC with whom their character has a Relationship. The player should track how many Relationship Points their character has with each NPC; whether that NPC is a Friend, a Rival, or a Beloved; whether that NPC confers Beloved Inspiration; and that NPC's Bond Boon or Bond Bane, whichever is applicable.

Report Cards. This section includes places to track the results of each Exam.

Extracurriculars. The player notes the Extracurriculars in which their character is participating. The player should also note each Extracurricular's NPC member. Remind players that while their character participates in an Extracurricular, they gain a positive or negative Relationship Point with its associated student NPC.

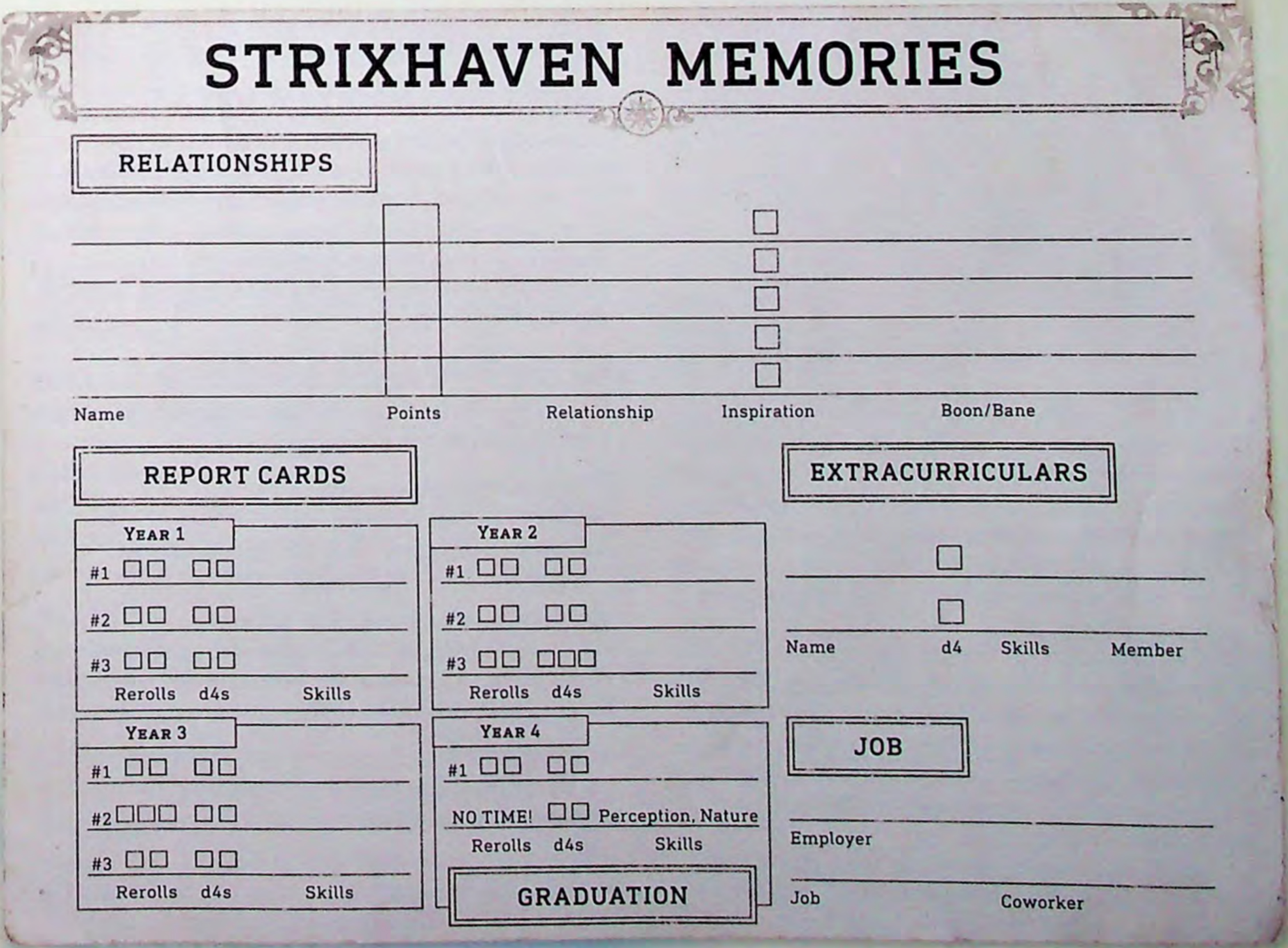
OPTING OUT OF THESE RULES

The rules for Extracurriculars, Jobs, Exams, and Relationships combine with the adventures in this book to enhance the flavor of life at a university of magic.

If you find these rules aren't the best fit for your group, you can run this book's adventures without those rules, simply narrating the effects of related encounters without using rules to resolve them.

Job. The player should note their character's job, if any. Remind the player that while their character holds a job, the character gains a positive or negative Relationship Point with its associated student coworker, whom they should also note on this sheet.

Student Dice. The player should track the Student Dice their character has from passing Exams and from Extracurriculars. They should also note the skills their character can expend the Student Dice on. They should check the "d4" box whenever they gain a Student Die, and they should erase the check mark when they expend the die.



STRIXHAVEN MEMORIES

RELATIONSHIPS

Name	Points	Relationship	Inspiration	Boon/Bane
			☐	
			☐	
			☐	
			☐	
			☐	

REPORT CARDS

YEAR 1

#1 ☐☐ ☐☐

#2 ☐☐ ☐☐

#3 ☐☐ ☐☐

Rerolls d4s Skills

YEAR 2

#1 ☐☐ ☐☐

#2 ☐☐ ☐☐

#3 ☐☐ ☐☐☐

Rerolls d4s Skills

YEAR 3

#1 ☐☐ ☐☐

#2 ☐☐☐ ☐☐

#3 ☐☐ ☐☐

Rerolls d4s Skills

YEAR 4

#1 ☐☐ ☐☐

NO TIME! ☐☐ Perception, Nature

Rerolls d4s Skills

GRADUATION

EXTRACURRICULARS

Name	d4	Skills	Member
	☐		
	☐		

JOB

Employer

Job Coworker

Students find many magical ways to celebrate their achievements.

Extracurriculars

Extracurriculars—the campus clubs and societies students can join—are a key part of student life at Strixhaven. Using the rules that follow, characters can join Extracurriculars to add flavor to the book's adventures, gain minor rules benefits, and perhaps more easily befriend—or irritate—their classmates.

Joining an Extracurricular

At any point during the book's adventures, a character can gain the benefit of two of the Extracurriculars noted below, as described later in this section. If a student character also works on campus using the Job rules, the character can benefit from only one Extracurricular.

Characters can gain the benefit from a new Extracurricular only by joining it at the start of an academic year, which corresponds to the beginning of a new adventure. Typically, joining an Extracurricular in between academic years isn't eventful. Players should note the changes on their tracking sheet.

Extracurricular Benefits

While a student participates in an Extracurricular, they gain a Student Die and a Relationship Point, as explained below.

Student Dice

Each character gains one Student Die for each Extracurricular they are participating in. A Student Die is a d4 the player can roll and add to an ability check that the character makes, provided the check uses one of the skills listed in the Extracurricular's description. The player can wait until after rolling the d20 before rolling the Student Die, but must do so before you say whether the check succeeds or fails. No more than one Student Die can be rolled per check. After rolling a Student Die, a player can't roll it again until the character finishes a long rest.

Relationship Point

While a student participates in an Extracurricular, the student gains either a positive or a negative Relationship Point (the player's choice) with one student NPC who is also a member of the Extracurricular (see the Relationship rules later in this chapter).

Quitting an Extracurricular

Characters can quit an Extracurricular at any time, updating their tracking sheet accordingly. When a student quits an Extracurricular, they immediately lose its benefits. If a character quits during an adventure, you might want to roleplay the situation, since NPCs are likely to take an interest in why the student is leaving.

Extracurricular Options

Student characters can join any of the following Extracurriculars.

Dead Languages Society

Skills: Athletics, History
Member: Drazhomir Yarnask, Quentillius A. Melentor III

These linguistics lovers take advantage of Strixhaven's deep repository of tomes written in ancient and near-extinct languages, teaching themselves these tongues and often translating their favorite works.

Distinguished Society of Fine Artists

Skills: Performance or Sleight of Hand
Member: Cadoras Damellawar, Nora Ann Wu

These painters, sculptors, printmakers, and mosaic artists gather to create fine works and to discuss the latest techniques and trends in the world of art.

Mathias Kollros

DRAGONCHESS CLUB

Skills: Deception, Investigation
Member: Bhedum "Rampart" Sooviij, Tilana Kapule

These experts in the game of dragonchess discuss the latest in strategy, compete against one another, and test out homemade variations of game rules.

DRAGONSGUARD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Skills: Arcana, History
Member: Bhedum "Rampart" Sooviij

These historians are fascinated by all time periods, and they regularly meet to discuss, debate, and deep dive into members' favorite topics.

FANTASTICAL HORTICULTURE CLUB

Skills: Nature, Survival
Member: Urzmaktok Grojsh

These green-thumbed experts love mixing magic and gardening to create new strains of vegetation, many of which they cultivate on campus.

FUTURE ENTREPRENEURS OF STRIXHAVEN

Skills: Insight, Persuasion
Member: Grayson Wildemere

These enterprising students discuss business theories. They often create small start-ups to sell wares and services appealing to students. The funds they generate fuel the club's activities.

INTRAMURAL GYMNASTICS CLUB

Skills: Acrobatics, Performance
Member: Zanther Bowen

These graceful gymnasts work to hone their craft, and they compete against each other in dazzling floor routines.

INTRAMURAL SILKBALL CLUB

Skills: Athletics, Intimidation
Member: Javenesh Stoutclaw, Melwythorne, Tilana Kapule

These hardy athletes train together and compete in the rough-and-tumble Strixhaven game of silkball, which is played in muddy fields with balls made of spider silk.

INTRAMURAL WATER-DANCING CLUB

Skills: Athletics, Performance
Member: Larine Arneza

These swimming enthusiasts combine their athletic skills with the finesse of artists as they choreograph water dances to the latest popular songs.

LIVE-ACTION ROLEPLAYING GUILD

Skills: Animal Handling, Performance
Member: Cadoras Damellawar, Rosimyffenbip "Rosie" Wuzfeddlims

These storytelling enthusiasts engage in a mix of strategy and playacting—often involving mascots—when they enact fantastical narratives that they resolve with special rules.

MAGE TOWER CHEER SQUAD

Skills: Perception, Persuasion
Member: Zanther Bowen

With their coordinated cheers, outfits, and school spirit, these cheerleaders inspire pride in the official Strixhaven University Mage Tower teams.

PLAYACTORS DRAMA GUILD

Skills: Arcana, Deception
Member: Quentillius A. Melentor III, Rubina Larkingdale

These actors work together to create productions of brilliant stagecraft, often involving new spins on old classics as well as displays of magic and music.

STRIXHAVEN IRON-LIFTERS SOCIETY

Skills: Athletics, Medicine
Member: Greta Gorunn

These bodybuilders support each other in developing strong muscles and even stronger friendships.

STRIXHAVEN SHOW BAND ASSOCIATION

Skills: Sleight of Hand, Performance
Member: Aurora Luna Wynterstarr, Rubina Larkingdale

These music enthusiasts play instruments such as hurdy-gurdies, bagpipes, flutes, and drums, and they regularly perform rousing concerts.

STRIXHAVEN STAR

Skills: Investigation, Insight
Member: Grayson Wildemere, Mina Lee

These truth seekers and wordsmiths report on campus news, regularly interviewing important figures and producing the monthly *Strixhaven Star* newspaper, which is distributed across the campus.

STUDENT-MAGES OF FAITH

Skills: Insight, Religion
Member: Melwythorne, Shuvadri Glintmantle

These pious students of many faiths gather to share prayers and theological debates and to celebrate one another's high holidays.

JOBS

Working in gainful employment while at school can provide a character with a modicum of cash and help forge connections with student coworkers.

GETTING OR LOSING A JOB

A character can hold one Job at a time, and they can participate in only one Extracurricular while they have a Job. A student can switch Jobs whenever they wish, even in the middle of the academic year, as long as they don't work more than one Job at a time. At your discretion, switching Jobs in the middle of the year might lead to a roleplaying scenario.

JOB BENEFITS

While a student has a Job, they earn a wage and a Relationship Point, as explained below.

WAGE

A student who works a Job gains 5 gp at the start of each week that they hold the Job. If a student quits during the academic year, they stop earning this money at the end of the week in which they quit.

RELATIONSHIP POINT

While a character works a Job, they gain a positive or negative Relationship Point (the player's choice) with one student NPC at that Job. This represents a coworker with whom the character is often scheduled and with whom they can easily form a connection (see the Relationship rules later in this chapter).

JOB OPTIONS

Student characters can find work at the places below. A number of possible positions are noted for each place, along with NPC coworkers.

BIBLIOPLEX

Jobs: Book clerk, book shelver, café worker, cleanup crew member, garden tender, store worker
Coworker: Drazhomir Yarnask

BOW'S END TAVERN

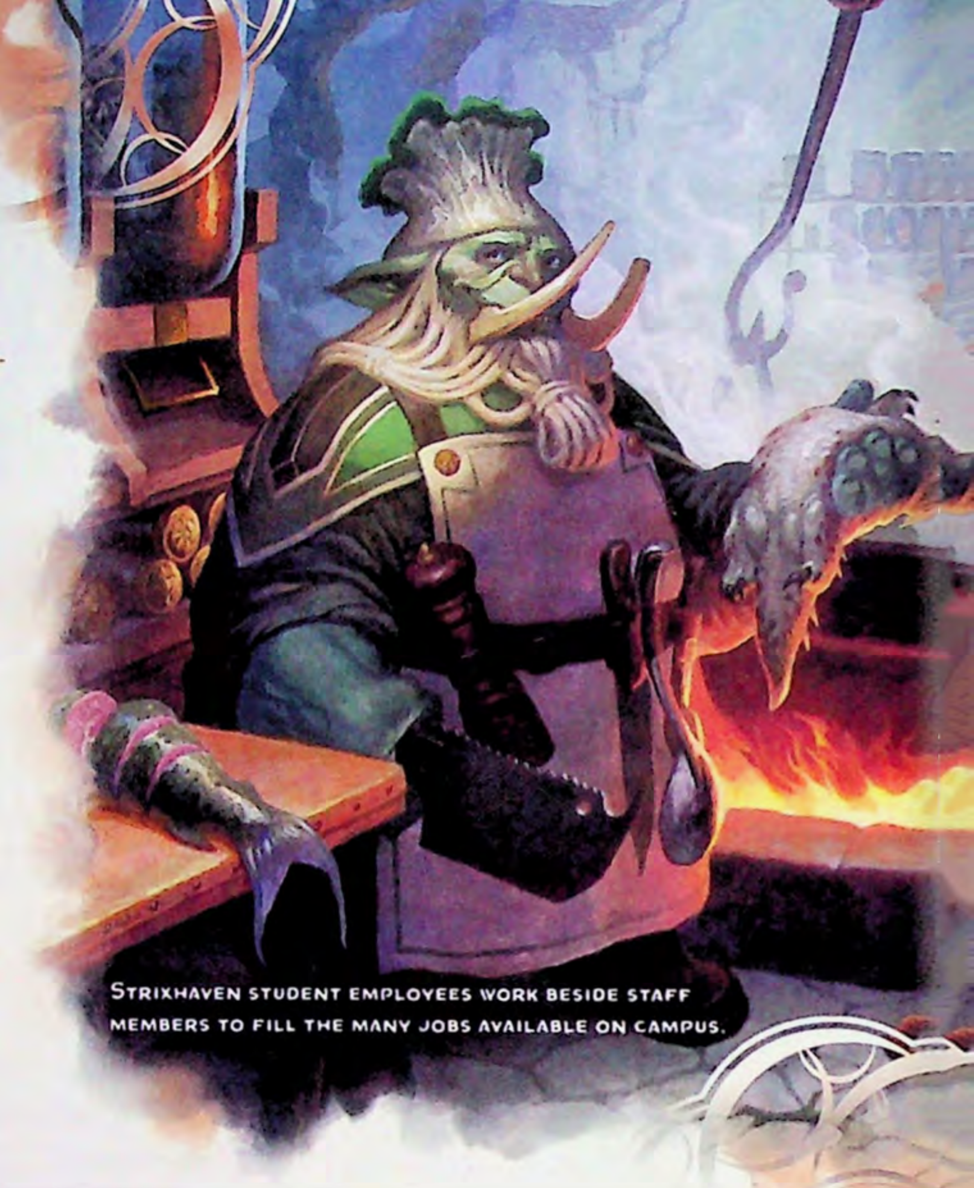
Jobs: Assistant manager, cleanup crew member, cook, host, server
Coworker: Javenesh Stoutclaw

CAMPUS GROUNDS

Jobs: Graffiti eraser, lawn manicurist, litter retriever, sidewalk sweeper, statuary repairer, trash collector
Coworker: Shuvadri Glintmantle

CAMPUS MAGIC LABS

Jobs: Cleanup crew member, specimen preparer, volunteer lab partner
Coworker: Urzmaktok Grojsh



STRIXHAVEN STUDENT EMPLOYEES WORK BESIDE STAFF MEMBERS TO FILL THE MANY JOBS AVAILABLE ON CAMPUS.

STEVE PRESCOTT

DORMITORIES

Jobs: Cleanup crew member, events assistant, front-desk worker, resident assistant
Coworker: Nora Ann Wu

FIREJOLT CAFÉ

Jobs: Barista, cashier, cleanup crew member, server
Coworker: Mina Lee

INTRAMURAL FIELDS

Jobs: Cleanup crew member, crowd manager, equipment assistant, groundskeeper, referee
Coworker: Rosimyffenbip "Rosie" Wuzfeddlims

STRIXHAVEN PERFORMING ARTS SOCIETY

Jobs: Cleanup crew member, general assistant, refreshments expert, stagehand, ticket taker, usher
Coworker: Larine Arneza

STRIXHAVEN STADIUM

Jobs: Cleanup crew member, entertainment assistant, equipment assistant, groundskeeper, refreshments expert, ticket taker, usher
Coworker: Aurora Luna Wynterstarr, Greta Gorunn

EXAMS

The characters' years at Strixhaven are covered by each of this book's adventures, which focus on the notable and even shocking events that take place at the university. Even though the characters' studies include the trappings of academic life—attending lectures, participating in labs, reading textbooks—those everyday academic activities mostly take place in the background. The exam rules presented here are thus designed to help the players keep their characters' studies part of the game.

USING THESE RULES

Each of the book's adventures includes Exams. Though each character might be a member of a different college at Strixhaven, the adventures assume that the characters take at least one general education or interdisciplinary course together each year. It is this course that the Exam rules represent.

Each Exam encounter has a Studying phase followed by a Testing phase. In general, a character can approach Studying in any way they desire, with that phase then culminating in a single ability check of their choice. In contrast, Testing requires ability checks using specific skills.

In each phase, resolve the outcome of one character's ability checks before moving on to another character. (If any characters are studying together, however, resolve their ability checks at the same time. See below for more information.)

Don't forget to have each player mark the results of an Exam on their tracking sheet!

STUDYING PHASE

The Studying phase of an Exam represents the characters brushing up on their coursework, prompting sparks of insight when faced with difficult questions, or using mnemonics or other memorization techniques to absorb academic material.

During the Studying phase, each character must succeed on an ability check against a DC noted in the encounter. They can use any ability and skill they wish when making this check, but they can make it only once.

For example, one student might make an Intelligence (History) check to pore over their books, while another student makes a Charisma (Performance) check to create a series of spoken mnemonic devices. A third student might make a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check to create reminding gestures or practice any physical components that are part of a course, such as the somatic gestures involved in spellcasting.

On a successful check, the character gains one reroll to use during the character's next Testing phase.

PULLING AN ALL-NIGHTER

After pulling an all-nighter, a character gains two rerolls to use during the next Testing phase if the character succeeds on the ability check. Doing so imposes a cost: the character gains 1 level of exhaustion that takes effect at the start of the day of the Exam. This level of exhaustion can't be removed until after the Exam.

STUDYING TOGETHER

If two or more characters engage in a group study session, each participating character has advantage on their ability check during the Studying phase.

SKIPPING STUDYING

A character can skip the Studying phase if they wish, forgoing the chance of gaining these rerolls.

TESTING PHASE

Once the Studying phase of an Exam is over, have the players record any rerolls their characters receive, then begin the Testing phase.

ABILITY CHECKS

Each Exam's Testing phase consists of two ability checks, with specifics (including the DC) noted in the encounter. If a character gained any rerolls during the Studying phase, the character can use one reroll when making a Testing ability check, rerolling the check's d20 and using the new roll.

Each character's Testing phase has three possible results:

Failed. No successful ability checks means a character failed, having gotten fewer than half the questions correct.

Passed. One successful ability check means a character passed, having gotten half or more of the questions correct, but not all the questions. The character gains one Student Die, explained below.

Aced. Two successful ability checks mean the character aced the Exam, having gotten all the questions correct. The character gains two Student Dice, explained below.

CHEATING

An unscrupulous character can cheat on an Exam. Doing so requires a successful Charisma (Deception) check and a successful Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check, both using the DC set for the Exam. If a character cheats, they can't use any rerolls from their Studying phase.

If the character fails either of these checks, a proctor or other authority figure notices the cheating, and the student fails the exam.

If the Charisma (Deception) and Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) checks are both successful, the character successfully cheats and aces the Exam.

A Witherbloom student heals a friend from Silverquill.

Andrey Kuzinskiy

Failed Exam

If a character fails an Exam, Strixhaven's bylaws require them to attend tutoring with a junior faculty member until they achieve at least a passed Exam in a different Exams encounter. This tutoring can be narrated through roleplaying, or you might simply inform the player of this result.

A student who must attend tutoring can't take part in any Extracurriculars or Jobs until they achieve at least a passed Exam during one of that academic year's Exam encounters. The character thus loses any benefits from Extracurriculars or Jobs, and their player should indicate this suspension on their tracking sheet.

Student Dice

A Student Die gained from an Exam is a d4 the player can roll and add to an ability check that the character makes, provided the check uses one of the two skills featured in the Exam. The player can wait until after rolling the d20 before rolling the Student Die, but must do so before you say whether the check succeeds or fails. No more than one Student Die can be rolled per check. After rolling a Student Die, a player can't roll it again until the character finishes a long rest.

Players should note any Student Dice they gain and the skills those dice can apply to on their tracking sheet.

At the end of each academic year, players lose any Student Dice their characters have earned from an Exam.

Relationships

As students, the characters have the opportunity to cement friendships, establish rivalries, deepen bonds, and otherwise develop relationships with student NPCs in this book's adventures. Although these pursuits could be played out entirely with roleplaying, you can use the following Relationship rules to reinforce this aspect of the adventures.

These rules provide characters with benefits—or drawbacks!—based on their social endeavors, infusing their interactions with other students with rules weight, and making this integral part of student life a more significant part of the game.

The rules encompass only interactions with student NPCs. Professors, administrators, and other older adults aren't part of the Relationship rules.

Session Zero

If you're interested in using these rules in your game, consider holding a session zero to introduce the rules to the players. Such a session zero allows you to ascertain players' comfort with these rules.

If some players want to use these rules and other players don't, using these rules only for some characters, or not using them at all, doesn't unbalance these adventures. Similarly, if you are uncomfortable engaging with the roleplaying encounters these rules describe, we recommend you don't use them.

If any players exhibit trepidation, err on the side of caution and don't use these rules for some or all of the characters. Characters who use these rules will have more focused roleplaying time than those who don't, so you might want to compensate for that lack of "on-screen" time with additional roleplaying encounters for the other characters.

USING THESE RULES

The book's adventures include Relationship encounters, featuring events during which characters can interact with one or more of the student NPCs in the "Fellow Students" section. When such an encounter begins, use the adventure's read-aloud text to describe the scene. Then work with the characters one at a time until each has had a turn to interact with the student NPCs.

The character of each participating player gains 1 Relationship Point or more with student NPCs during Relationship encounters. A character's number of Relationship Points with a specific NPC determines their status with that NPC.

INTRODUCING THE NPCS

Use the entries in the "Fellow Students" section to populate Strixhaven as the characters explore it, both during and between adventures. Highlight those NPCs when the characters are at a Job or participating in an Extracurricular, and draw from the entries whenever you want to roleplay an NPC in a classroom setting.

When it comes time for a Relationship encounter, you might ask a player whether a specific NPC has intrigued them. If so, make sure that NPC interacts with them during the encounter. Alternatively, characters who have joined an Extracurricular or taken on a Job might encounter an NPC associated with that endeavor.

You may also allow your players to browse the "Fellow Students" section to learn more about the NPCs.

RELATIONSHIP POINTS

The characters have opportunities throughout the adventures in this book to gain Relationship Points with student NPCs. At your discretion, in addition to Relationship encounters, other roleplaying encounters might also provide Relationship Points.

A character's total number of Relationship Points with an NPC determines their status with that NPC, as described below. Relationship Points start at 0 and increase or decrease by 1 each time a character interacts with one of the NPCs covered by these rules, whether in a Relationship encounter or during another roleplaying scene.

When a character interacts with a student NPC, that character's player decides which of the following categories they wish their response to fall under:

Friendly Response. A friendly response earns 1 Relationship Point. A friendly response is positive; it might take the form of showing warmth or providing affirmation and camaraderie, as the encounter dictates.

Rivalrous Response. A rivalrous response earns −1 Relationship Point. A rivalrous response is negative, and might take the form of being rude to the NPC, antagonizing the NPC, or taking similar unkind actions.

Each time a character's number of Relationship Points changes for an NPC, the player should note that on their tracking sheet. The sheet can also be used to track other details about the Relationship.

MAKING FRIENDS AND RIVALS

While a character has 2 Relationship Points or more with a student NPC, that NPC becomes a Friend, and the character receives a **Bond Boon** from that person as long as the NPC is a Friend.

While a character has −2 Relationship Points or less with a student NPC, that NPC becomes a Rival, and the character receives a **Bond Bane** from that person as long as the NPC is a Rival.

Bond Boons and Bond Banes are noted in each NPC entry in the "Fellow Students" section. When a character makes a Friend or a Rival, the player should note it on their tracking sheet.

At any time during the adventures in this book, a character can end their friendship with an NPC, effective immediately. When they do so, that character's Relationship Points with the NPC reset to 0.

DEEPENING RELATIONSHIPS

Once a student NPC has become a character's Friend, the character has the option of deepening the Relationship. The next time a Relationship encounter happens with the Friend, the character can express a wish for a deeper connection with that NPC. This might be a romantic pairing, a deeper platonic camaraderie, or a sibling-like bond. Before this encounter takes place, talk to the player to ensure a clear understanding of what sort of Relationship they seek with the NPC.

BECOMING BELOVEDS

If a player wants a deeper Relationship between their character and a Friend, the Friend can become the character's Beloved if the character has 2 Relationship Points or more with the NPC. During the next Relationship encounter, they can deepen their Relationship and become Beloveds, in addition to the normal interaction the Relationship encounter allows.

Students discuss their shared interests during a sunset date.

Beloved Inspiration

When a character has a Beloved, the character gains Beloved Inspiration at the end of each long rest. Beloved Inspiration functions like regular Inspiration (as described in the *Player's Handbook*), except a character regains a number of uses of Beloved Inspiration after each long rest equal to the number of Beloveds they have, not to exceed a number equal to their proficiency bonus.

Ending Beloved Relationships

A character can end a Beloved Relationship at any time. When that Relationship ends, the NPC no longer provides Beloved Inspiration to the character.

If the character's Relationship Points with the NPC ever drop below 1, the Beloved Relationship ends immediately.

Fellow Students

The student NPCs are described on the next few pages. Each NPC entry includes personal details and a short biography, along with the Extracurriculars and Job the character is involved in, if any. If an NPC becomes a character's Friend, the character receives the Bond Boon noted in the NPC's entry. If the NPC becomes a Rival, the character suffers the noted Bond Bane instead.

College and Year

The academic year noted for an NPC is during the "Campus Kerfuffle" adventure in this chapter. College affiliations for first-year students are provided for flavor and for their subsequent years (students don't join a college until their second year).

If you're playing the adventures in later chapters, the NPCs noted as first-year students have advanced to be the same year as the player characters, and have officially joined their colleges. NPCs noted as second-year students are always a year ahead of the characters. During "A Reckoning in Ruins" in chapter 6, student NPCs who were in higher years when the characters started at Strixhaven are still around on campus as continuing students or recent alumni.

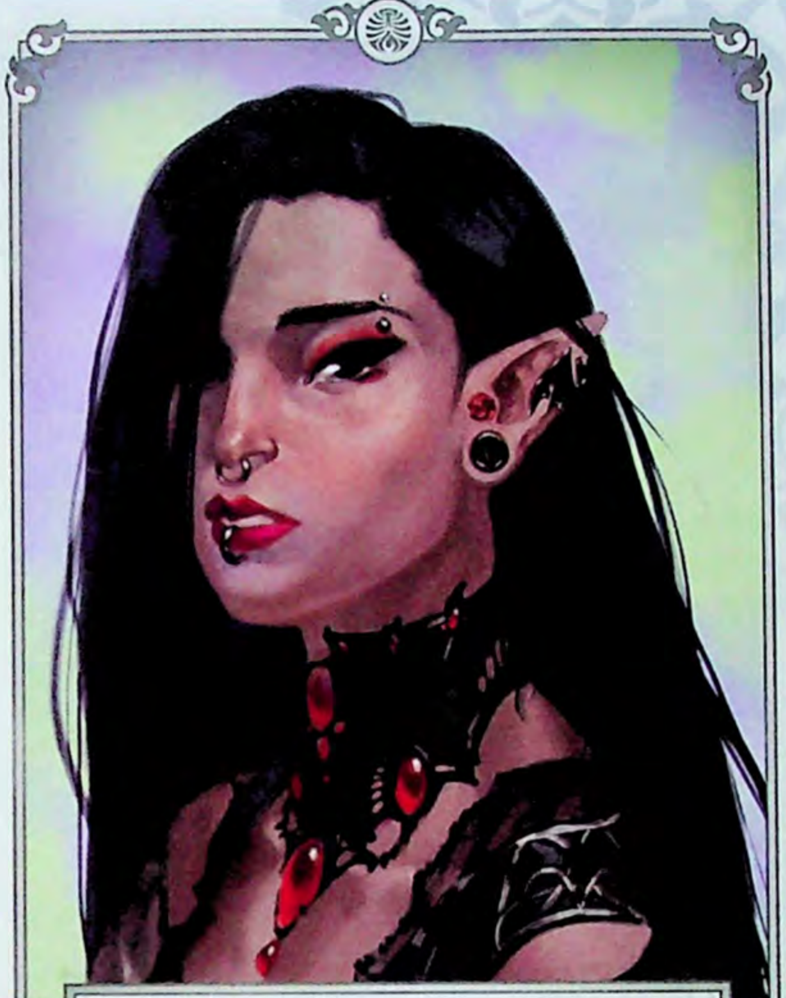
Stat Blocks

The student NPCs are meant to interact with the characters primarily in roleplaying situations and to help create the flavor of attending a university. They aren't intended to wade into combat—or even venture off campus—when the characters embark on adventures.

In general, avoid putting these student NPCs in danger with the characters. In situations when you need stat blocks for these NPCs, use the stat block indicated for them in the Student NPC Stat Blocks table, where the stat blocks depend on the student's year during the current adventure. These stat blocks can be found in chapter 7, and in the table, "[College]" refers to the name of the NPC's college: Lorehold, Prismari, Quandrix, Silverquill, or Witherbloom.

Student NPC Stat Blocks

Year	Stat Block
First	First-Year Student
Second	[College] Apprentice
Third or Later	[College] Pledgemage



Aurora Luna Wynterstarr

Neutral Dhampir First Year (Witherbloom)

Before arriving at Strixhaven, Aurora changed her name and appearance to that of her on-stage persona: Aurora Luna Wynterstarr, the brilliant singer and songwriter. Aurora was born a dhampir (a partial vampire), which she's taken as a cosmic sign that she is meant for greatness.

An accomplished musician on several instruments, Aurora is often found at Bow's End Tavern performing beautiful dirges on the hurdy-gurdy for the assembled patrons. Aurora is also a member of the Strixhaven Show Band Association, though she believes the music they play lacks the raw emotion of her original compositions.

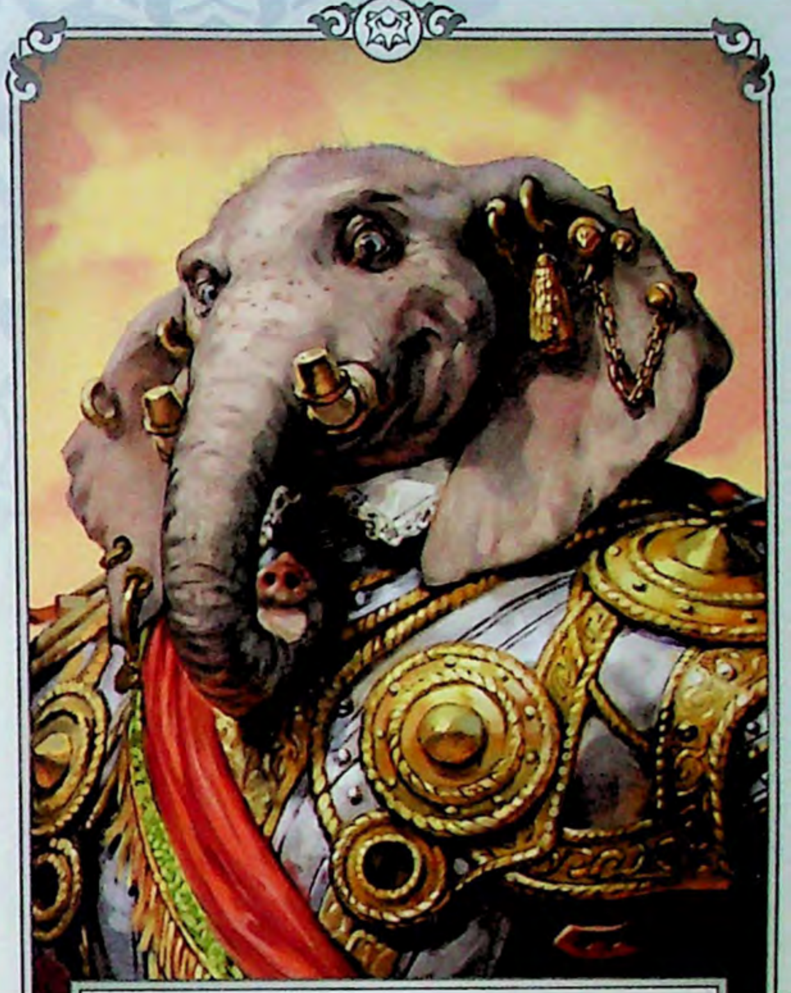
She works as a groundskeeper at the Strixhaven Stadium, where she takes great pleasure in using magic to blight undesirable vegetation on the field.

Extracurriculars: Strixhaven Show Band Association

Job: Strixhaven Stadium groundskeeper

Bond Boon: Out of respect for Aurora, fellow campus musicians will cover your expenses for one night per week at places where live music is common.

Bond Bane: When there's live music on campus, the lyrics always include rude sentiments directed toward you.



Bhedum "Rampart" Sooviij

Lawful Neutral Loxodon First Year (Lorehold)

Since their name is difficult to pronounce without a trunk, Bhedum has taken to referring to themself as "Rampart," the closest translation of their name in Common. They are often found poring over ancient texts detailing battles, seeking to better understand the tactical decisions that result in victory and defeat. Rampart is happy to discuss their knowledge with fellow members of the Dragonsguard Historical Society, often doing so late into the night.

Rampart's opponents at the Dragonchess Club find themselves outmatched time and again by the loxodon's technique, though Rampart is a gracious winner. They attend all their classes clad in gilded, centuries-old plate armor, with an immense and similarly decorated sword strapped to their back. Rampart explains that doing so better simulates the battlefield conditions they study.

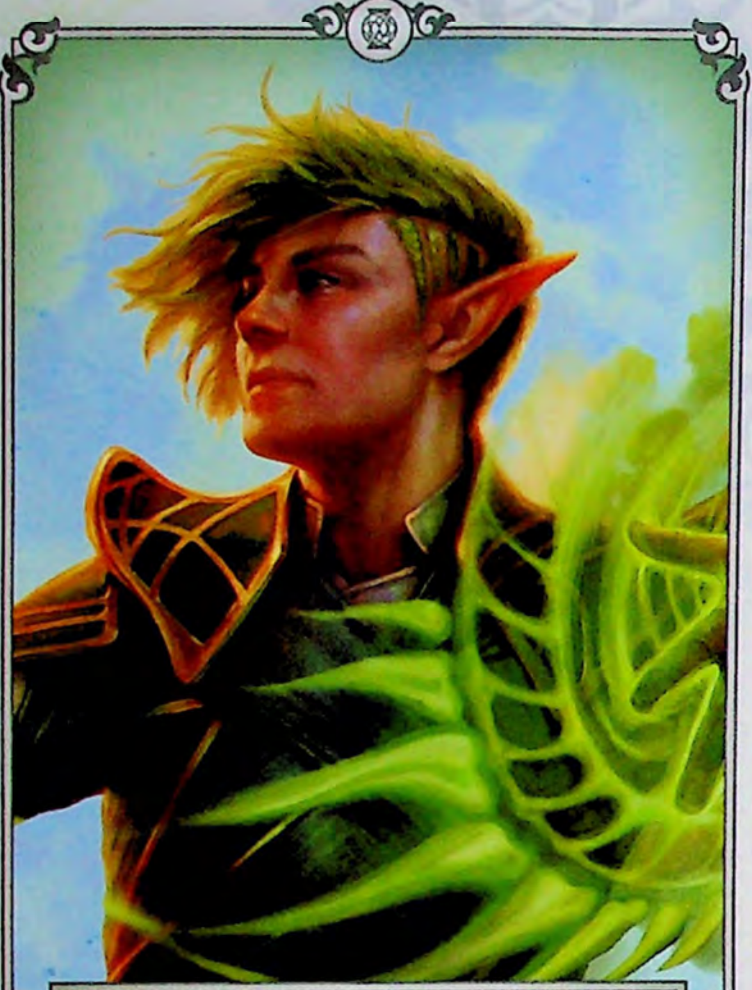
Extracurriculars: Dragonchess Club, Dragonsguard Historical Society

Job: None

Bond Boon: Rampart's commanding presence rubs off, and when you're trying to avoid campus security, your fellow students always help you lie low.

Bond Bane: Library books you need inexplicably go missing at key times, especially those about history. As a result, you can't pull all-nighters.

OLGA DREBAS, EKATERINA BURMAK



Cadoras Damellawar

Chaotic Good Elf First Year (Quandrix)

Cadoras is a jolly soul, and anyone who spends time with him ends up chuckling at whatever nonsense he is currently sporting. He is a passionate member of the Live-Action Roleplaying Guild and loves playing out all sorts of fantastical adventures. He always roleplays archers, entirely because he's recently spent a lot of money on a prop-bow and can't afford anything else. He is also a member of the university's Distinguished Society of Fine Artists, where he uses magic to sculpt beautiful statuary of complex fractal patterns. The fact that he is self-taught makes the quality of his work that much more impressive.

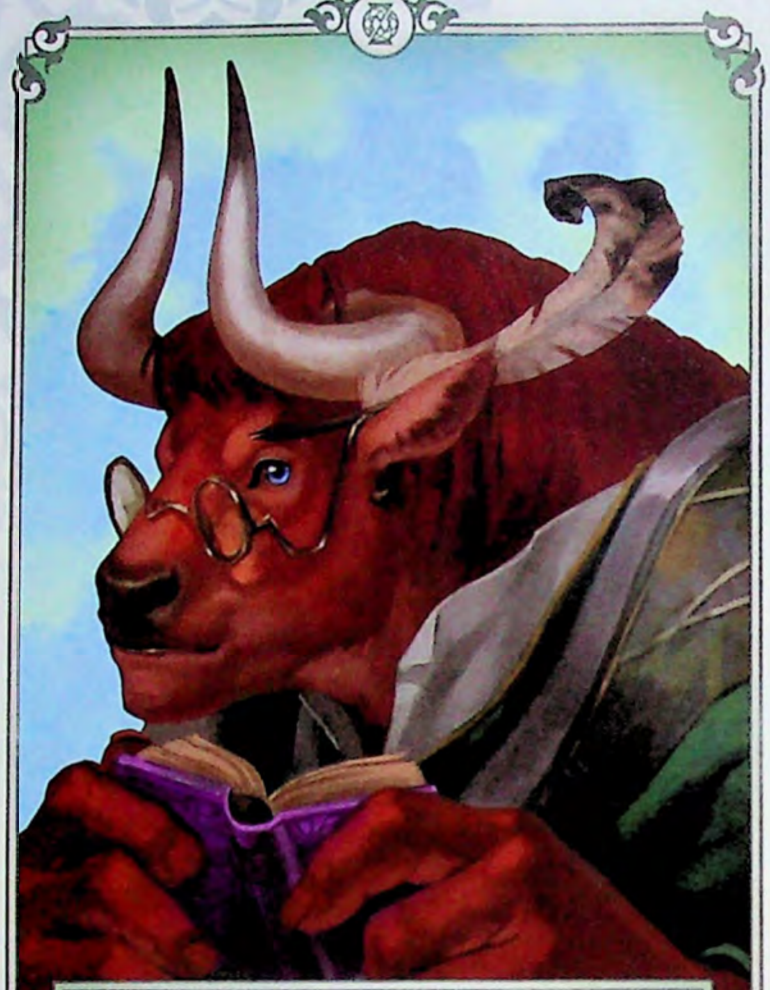
Cadoras does have some strange eating habits; he sometimes eats an entire jar of pickled onions in a single sitting and then drinks the vinegar.

Extracurriculars: Distinguished Society of Fine Artists, Live-Action Roleplaying Guild

Job: None

Bond Boon: The esteem for Cadoras in live-action roleplaying circles extends to you. Guild members will share any information you wish to know about Aberrations, Monstrosities, and Oozes.

Bond Bane: You are a pariah in the campus roleplaying scene. The worst monsters are named after you.



Drazhomir Yarnask

Neutral Good Minotaur Second Year (Quandrix)

Drazhomir is so soft-spoken that many of his peers must ask him to speak up to be understood. He is over seven feet tall, yet he continuously stoops, as if trying to occupy as little space as possible. Several activities and clubs that involve feats of strength and size continuously try to recruit him—to no avail. Drazhomir prefers spending his time in the Biblioplex, where he works as a book clerk, assisting students in finding required texts and shelving returns. He moves silently through the stacks, and he has given more than one student a scare when they've turned around to suddenly find him there.

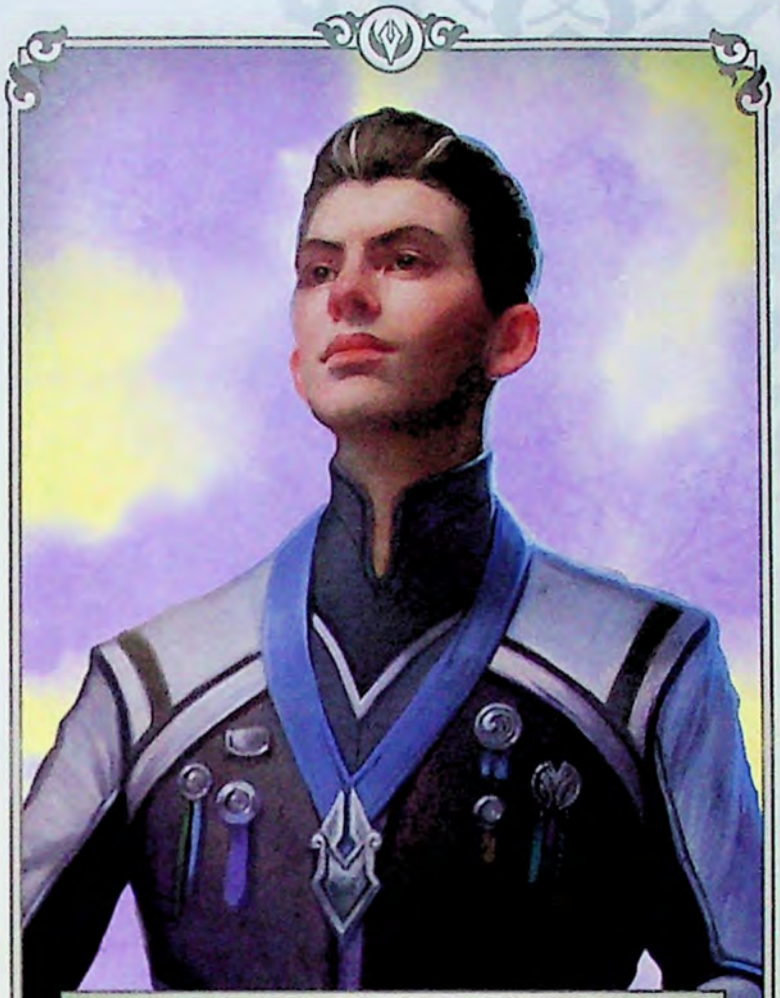
Drazhomir's greatest love is poetry. As a member of the university's Dead Languages Society, he scours ancient literature for stirring poems written in old tongues, reading them to the rest of the group in a soft, resonant voice that comes directly from his soul.

Extracurriculars: Dead Languages Society

Job: Biblioplex book clerk

Bond Boon: Drazhomir writes you poetry, and the smile it puts on your face makes you likable to everyone on campus except the most stone-hearted.

Bond Bane: Other students who work in the Biblioplex refuse to help you find any of the tomes you seek. Even the reference librarians are more cryptic.



GRAYSON WILDEMERE

Neutral Human First Year (Silverquill)

Grayson comes from an old, moneyed, and influential family. To him, studying at Strixhaven is a means to an end. Learning business acumen is just as important to Grayson as his classes, so he has joined the Future Entrepreneurs of Strixhaven. Grayson makes a point to know as much about everyone as possible, gathering information until he finds the best circumstance to use it. Having learned to pick locks, he often accesses places where he's unauthorized, searching for secrets.

Grayson has become a writer for the *Strixhaven Star*, where he's responsible for the gossip column. His writing style is biting, and he uses this platform to expose bullies and mock ignorance. Many of his peers are leery of him, but some have witnessed him paying for poorer students' books and other supplies—a fact he tries to keep secret.

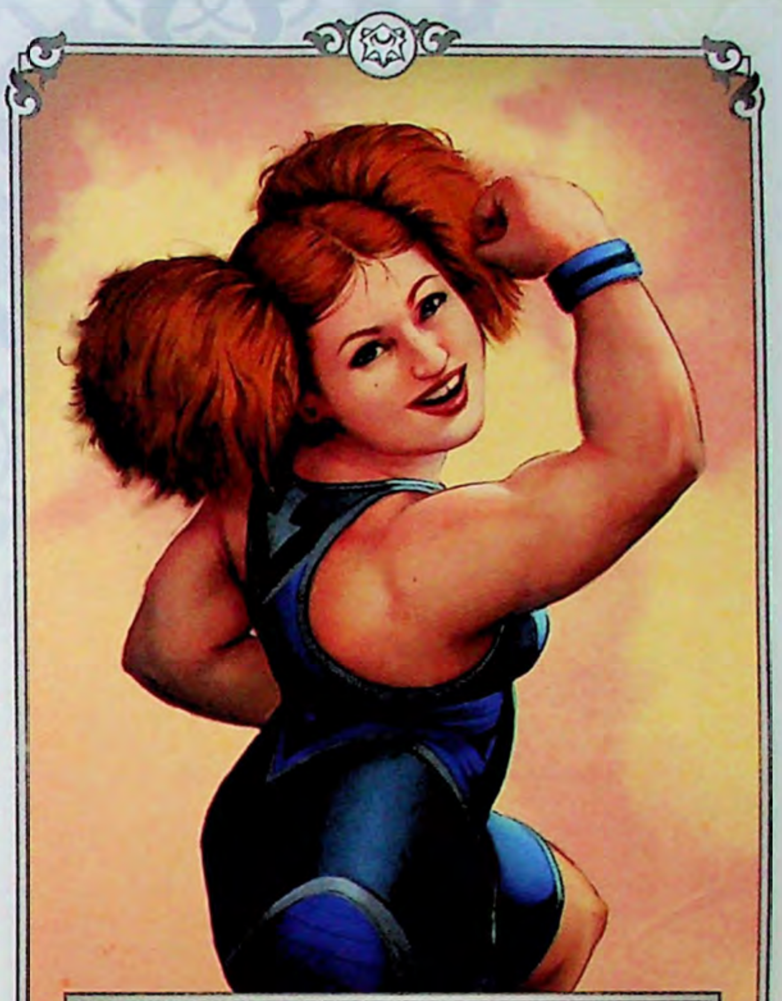
Extracurriculars: Future Entrepreneurs of Strixhaven, *Strixhaven Star*

Job: None

Bond Boon: Whenever you want to buy something on campus, a few words from Grayson get you deals. There's a 25 percent chance your purchase costs half as much.

Bond Bane: Gossip columns proclaim exaggerated versions of your worst traits.

HOWARD LYON, TONY FOTI



GRETA GORUNN

Chaotic Good Dwarf First Year (Lorehold)

Greta is often heard long before she is seen, as her raucous laughter echoes through the university's halls. Enjoying a reputation as a golden-hearted troublemaker, Greta hates studying and grumbles about it at length. This has led to numerous warnings from the librarians for unnecessarily loud behavior, much to Greta's amusement.

A fervent member of the Strixhaven Iron-Lifters Society, she has already started to break long-held records in both powerlifting and weightlifting. When not training or competing (or occasionally studying), Greta spends her time in Bow's End Tavern carousing. As beer isn't free, she helps out at Strixhaven Stadium, setting up and putting away heavy equipment. Most people would begrudge the hard labor, but Greta happily does it, reasoning that she is being paid to work out.

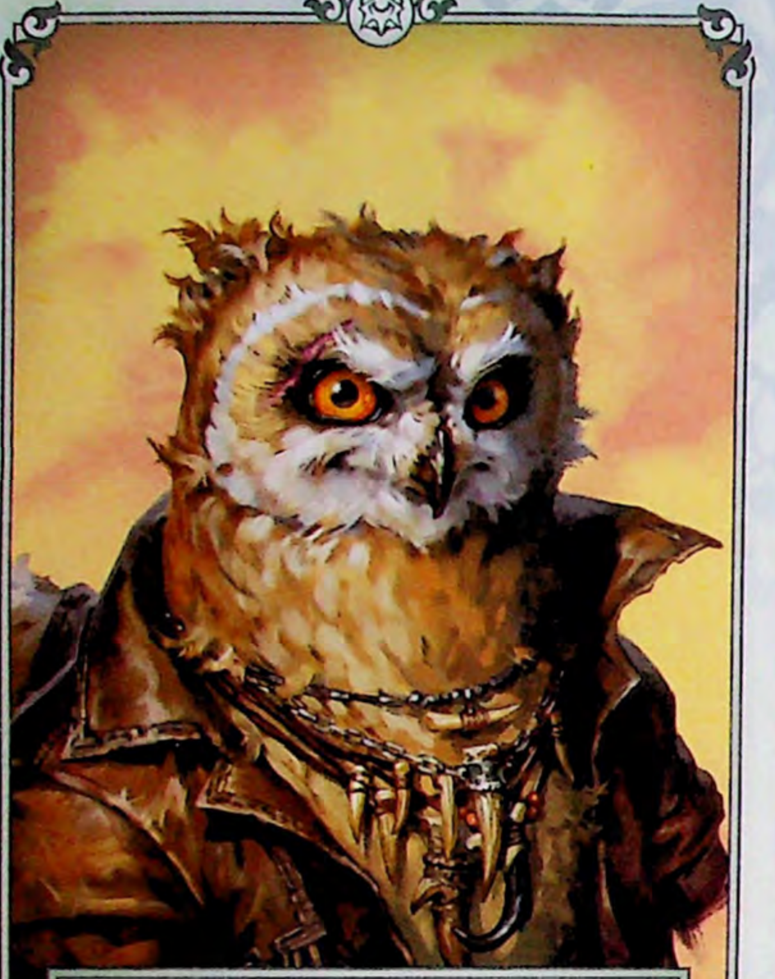
Greta makes a point to write regularly to her older brother, Grog, whom she misses terribly.

Extracurriculars: Strixhaven Iron-Lifters Society

Job: Strixhaven Stadium equipment assistant

Bond Boon: Whenever you need anything heavy moved, members of the Iron-Lifters Society show up to help you.

Bond Bane: Heavy things show up in inconvenient places, such as in front of your dorm door.



Javenesh Stoutclaw

Neutral Good Owlin Second Year (Lorehold)

Javenesh is an imposing and powerfully built owlin who looks permanently scruffy despite his best efforts. Contributing to his dishevelment are tufts of juvenile plumage that refuse to smooth down, a handful of scars whose origin he's not sure of, and at least one hole in whatever clothing he's wearing.

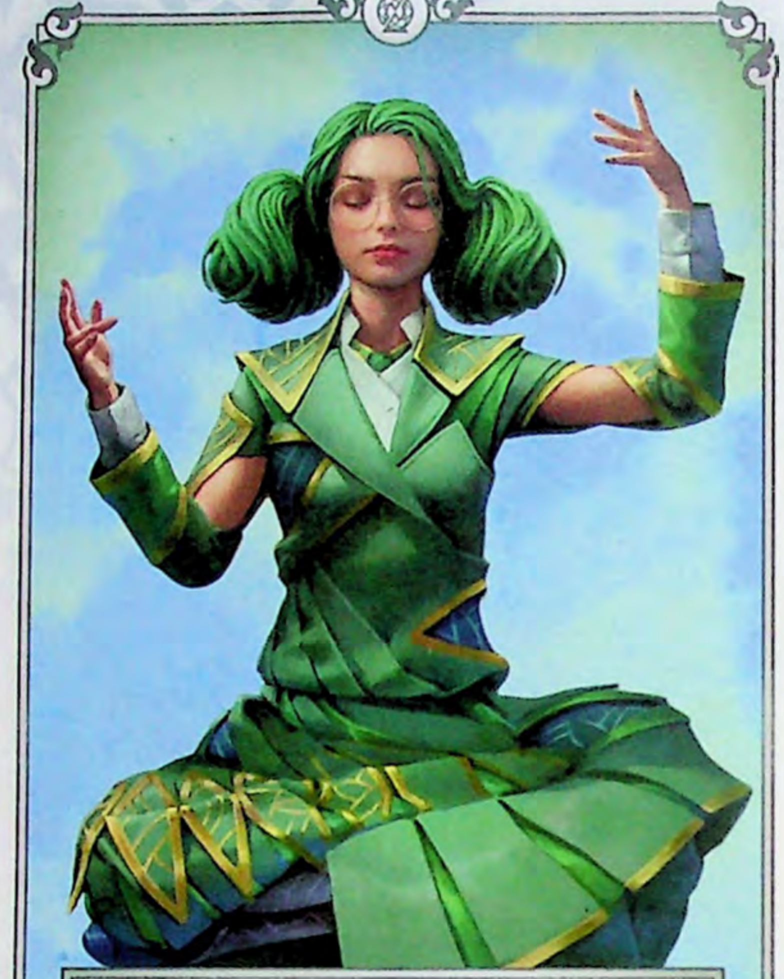
Contrary to what people initially assume, Javenesh is a friendly sort. To make ends meet, he works at Bow's End Tavern, managing servers and keeping the peace, relying on his rough appearance to dissuade those intent on making trouble. When not attending classes, Javenesh is an intimidating presence at the Intramural Silkball Club, where few people want to see him barreling toward them. He wishes more people would take the effort to get to know him, rather than be put off by his size and rough exterior.

Extracurriculars: Intramural Silkball Club

Job: Bow's End Tavern assistant manager

Bond Boon: Javenesh's reputation as a tough guy follows you. If peers would be aggressive toward you, they quickly back down.

Bond Bane: The servers at Bow's End Tavern know you are no friend to Javenesh. At the slightest sign of trouble, they blame you and ask you to leave.



Larine Arneza

Neutral Good Human First Year (Quandrix)

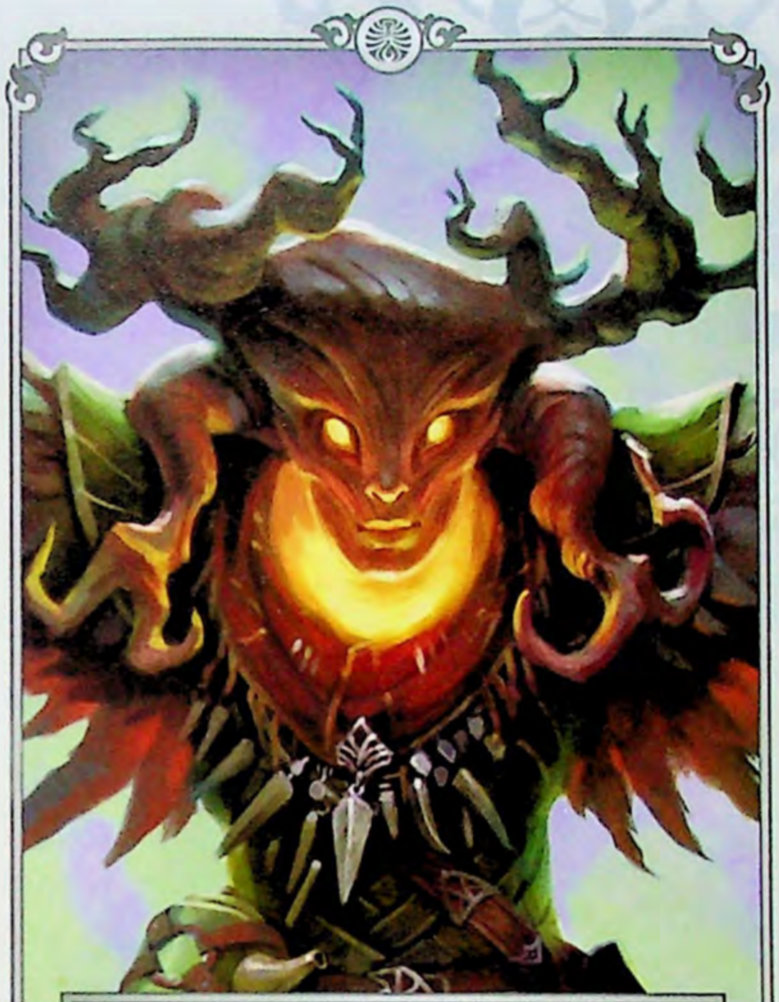
Some think Larine is aloof to the point of being rude, but her friends say that nothing is further from the truth. She is a delightful presence and doesn't ignore social obligations so much as get distracted easily. Larine is a member of the Intramural Water-Dancing Club, where she performs underwater balletic movements effortlessly. Despite her swimming ability, her tendency to lose focus means learning group choreography takes her more time and effort. Larine has a natural affinity with animals, especially aquatic species, and she's working on a solo synchronized swimming routine that replaces the other students with a shoal of fish. Rehearsals aren't going well. As an employee of the Strixhaven Performing Arts Society, Larine is a ticket taker, a job she's recently switched to as a result of struggling to give correct change while working at the box office.

Extracurriculars: Intramural Water-Dancing Club

Job: Strixhaven Performing Arts Society ticket taker

Bond Boon: Larine is an expert at creating stylized distractions. If you want to slip away unnoticed from anywhere on campus, Larine or her club members help you escape.

Bond Bane: You are offered the worst tickets to performances, if any at all.



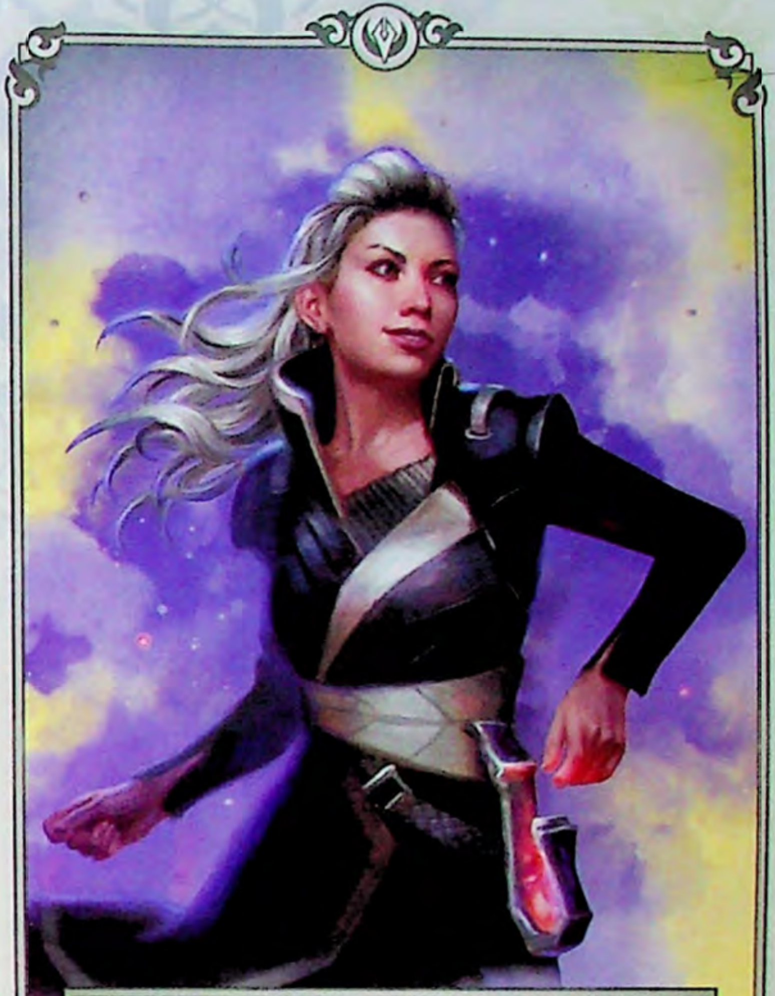
MELWYTHORNE

Neutral Good Dryad First Year (Witherbloom)

Towering over most students, Melwythorne strikes an imposing figure, especially given the branches that grow from his head like antlers. Calm in demeanor, he's often confused by the people rushing around him, as their haste won't lengthen their brief lifespans. Melwythorne had never been away from his grove before coming to Strixhaven and has found the transition to university life difficult. However, since he joined the Intramural Silkball Club, this close-knit surrogate family has helped him deal with his homesickness.

He is also a member of the Student-Mages of Faith. He enjoys helping his fellow students celebrate their high holidays and discussing theology and spirituality. For him, the natural world and all living beings form a vast consciousness across all planes of existence, transcending the power and reach of any one deity.

Extracurriculars: Intramural Silkball Club, Student-Mages of Faith
Job: None
Bond Boon: Melwythorne's spirituality centers you. You can calm even the most frazzled of your peers and, if necessary, extract information as needed.
Bond Bane: Members of the silkball club and the Student-Mages of Faith refuse to acknowledge your presence.



MINA LEE

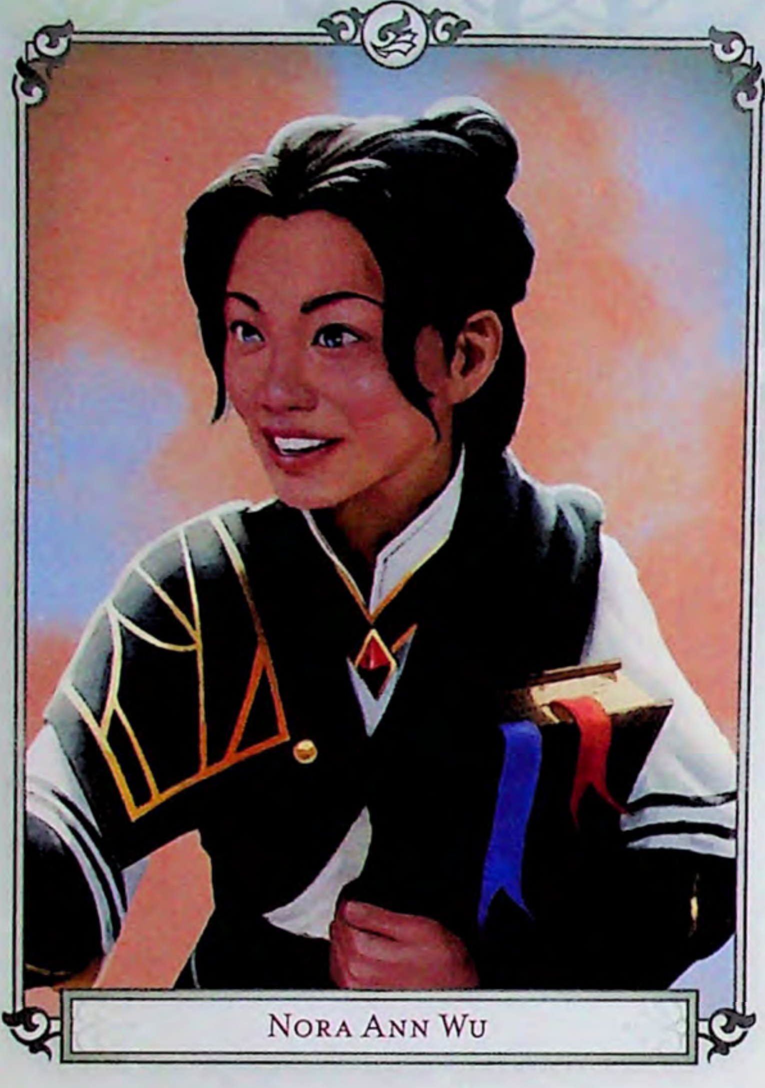
Lawful Good Human Second Year (Silverquill)

Mina's greatest love is the use of language; she adores how subtle differences in intonation and vocabulary can shape one's perception of reality. Her fascination with language extends to spells and verbal components. After graduation, she plans to conduct research on the variance of language in spells and how one might tweak verbal components that the greater magical community considers immutable.

Mina's love of language and nuance has led her to join the *Strixhaven Star* as an investigative journalist. Here, she reveals truth, corrects misconceptions, and combats injustice. She has also taken a job as a server at Firejolt Café, which not only provides some cash but also puts her in a position to overhear snippets of conversation that might provide leads for her journalistic investigations.

Extracurriculars: *Strixhaven Star*
Job: Firejolt Café server
Bond Boon: Mina loves sharing her vast repository of knowledge with you. If you seek obscure information that's not secret, Mina researches it and reports her findings within a week.
Bond Bane: Firejolt Café never has the ingredients in stock for the beverages you initially order, even if it's a common drink.

DMITRY BURMAK, LINDSEY LOOK



NORA ANN WU

Neutral Good Human Second Year (Prismari)

Rarely without a smile on her face, Nora is a kind person who is generous with her time and attention. This has led her to gain employment within the university's dormitories, where she acts as a resident assistant. Nora offers confidential support to any student and is especially passionate about counseling other transgender students. She thoughtfully handles concerns ranging from students' homesickness to matters that require her to act as an advocate for another student.

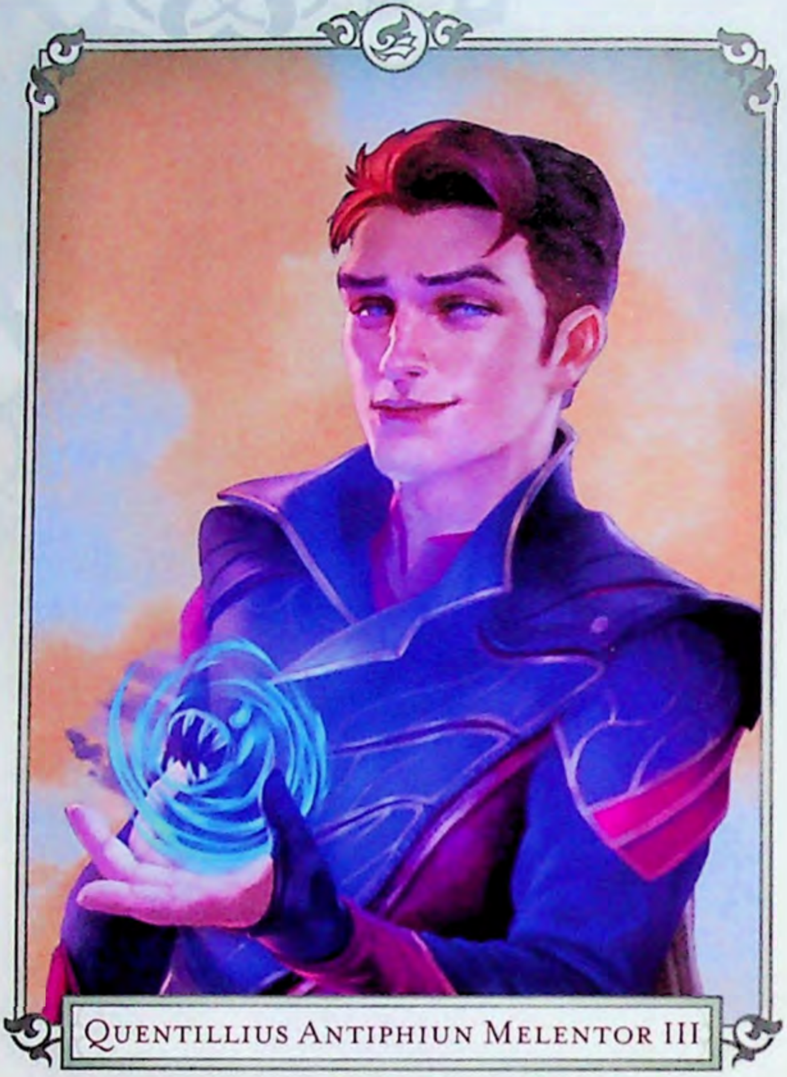
Nora is a passionate member of the Distinguished Society of Fine Artists. As such, she spends hours on the potter's wheel throwing clay. Despite her enthusiasm, her technical skill is lacking. Her tutors, in attempts to be encouraging, often describe Nora's work as rustic or naive. Undeterred, Nora continues to produce terrible mug after terrible mug, which she gives as gifts to her friends.

Extracurriculars: Distinguished Society of Fine Artists

Job: Dormitories resident assistant

Bond Boon: The faculty's respect for Nora extends to you. You can expect straightforward answers when you ask a faculty member for basic information.

Bond Bane: Few faculty care to help you with basic requests.



QUENTILLIUS ANTIPHIUN MELENTOR III

Neutral Human First Year (Prismari)

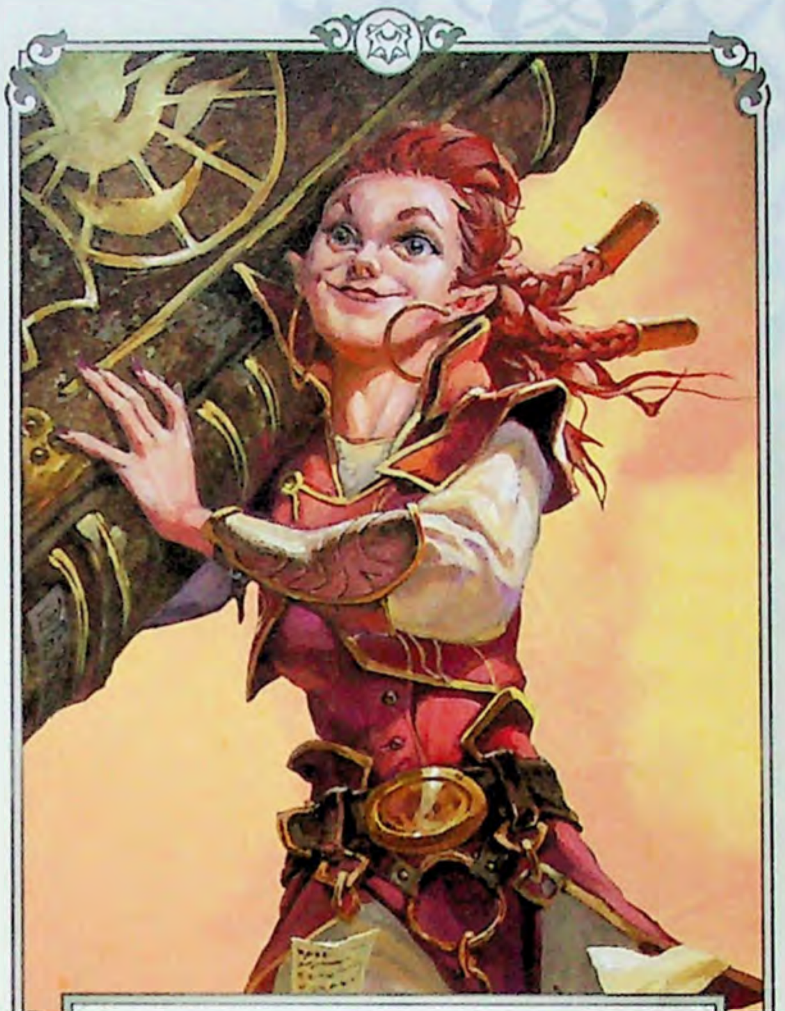
Quentillius approaches all his endeavors with the utmost seriousness. He believes one should either do something correctly or not at all. Quentillius is a member of the university's Playactors Drama Guild, where his dedication to what he calls "the craft" is absolute. He looks down on other actors who are slow to memorize lines or who miss cues. Backstage crew members fare better, as Quentillius regards them as crucial and often brings them and the director flowers or notes of thanks. While Quentillius is a powerful presence on stage—especially in romantic roles—critics have called his performances histrionic. To better perform his future roles in ancient plays, Quentillius has joined the Dead Languages Society. He plans to perform his roles in the plays' original languages, regardless of whether the rest of the production is translated.

Extracurriculars: Dead Languages Society, Playactors Drama Guild

Job: None

Bond Boon: You have adopted Quentillius's authoritative voice, and in dire situations, your peers obey you when you issue commands.

Bond Bane: Whenever you perform as part of a production, a small crowd shows up and boos you specifically.



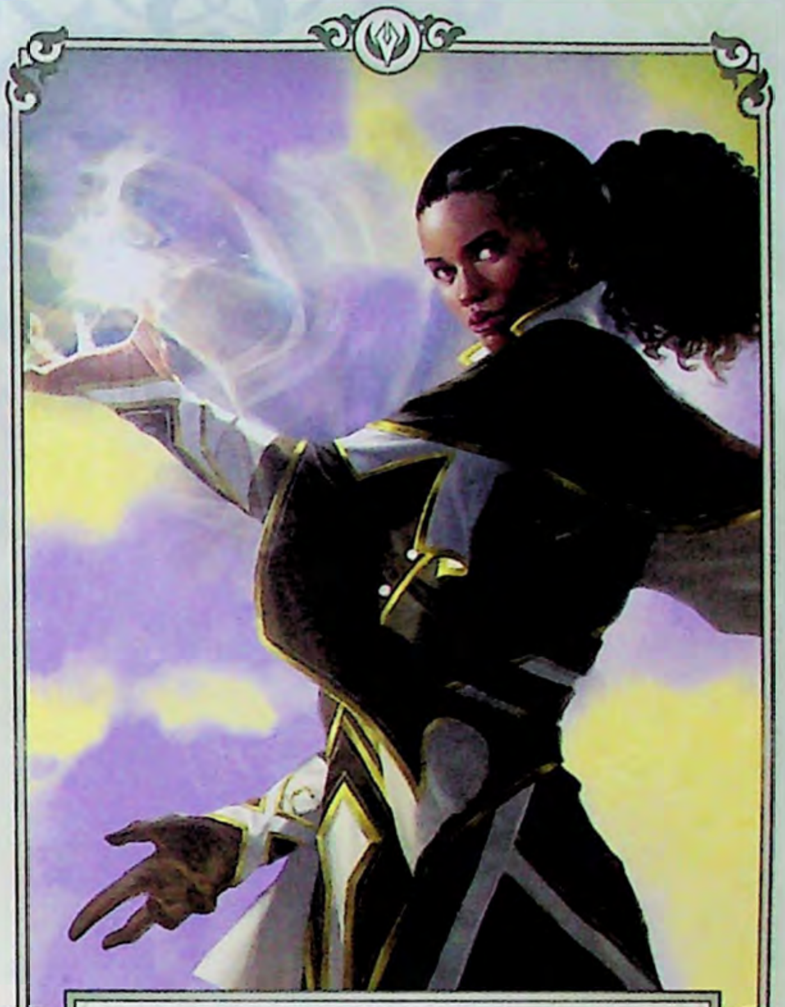
Rosimyffenbip "Rosie" Wuzfeddlims

Chaotic Good Gnome First Year (Lorehold)

Excitable and impish, Rosimyffenbip is proud of her name; she insists you can call her "Rosie" only if you are her friend. Or a teacher. Or a student. Or any other member of the university staff. Rosie speaks quickly and with so much energy that it often takes a moment to recover from a conversation with her. She moves far faster than one would expect; it's unclear whether this is due to magic, a gnomish technological contraption, or just the laws of physics bending to Rosie's force of personality.

Rosie referees silkball and takes fair play very seriously. Woe betide any participant who feels the wrath of her whistle. Rosie is also an enthusiastic participant in Strixhaven's Live-Action Roleplaying Guild. She insists on roleplaying only "monsters" and delights in chasing down participants to "eat" them. Many a participant has heard giggling approaching them at high speed before their character's death.

Extracurriculars: Live-Action Roleplaying Guild
Job: Intramural Fields referee
Bond Boon: Rosie's energy is contagious. Whenever you travel any significant distance, you can reach your destination in half the normal time.
Bond Bane: Whenever you participate in sports on campus (except for big events, such as the Battle of Strixhaven), fouls are constantly called on you.



Rubina Larkingdale

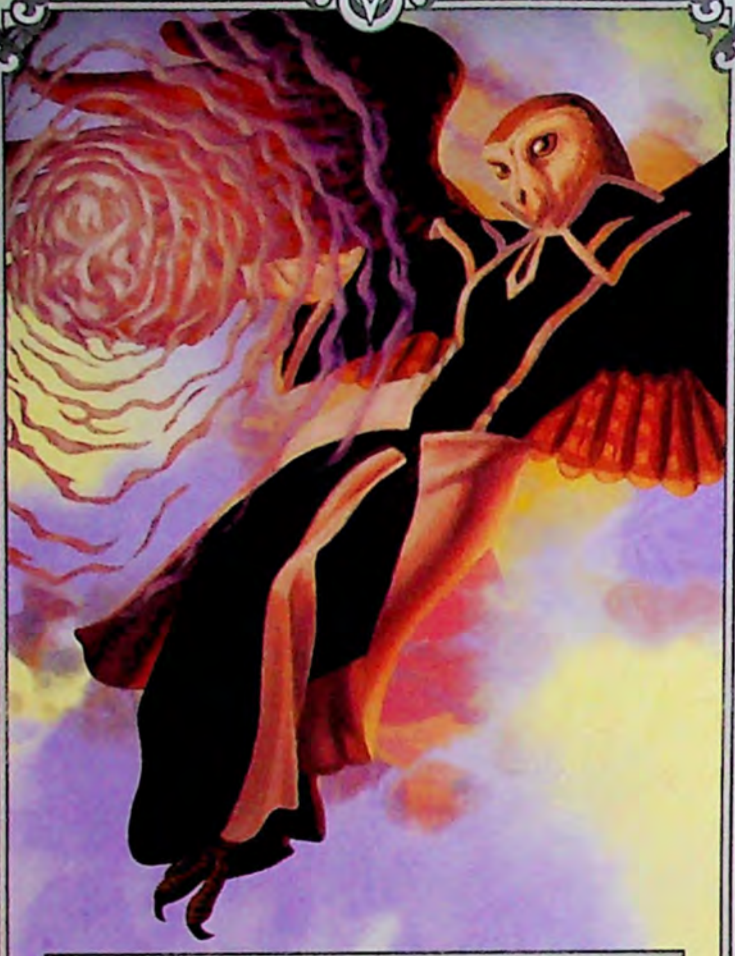
Lawful Neutral Human First Year (Silverquill)

When Rubina walks into a room, people take notice. A measured performer with gravitas beyond her years, Rubina is a valued member of the Playactors Drama Guild who can handle weightier roles that more melodramatic actors can't. This has caused friction within the guild as members vie for parts. Rubina's stage presence extends to delivering presentations in class. When she orates, one can almost imagine a hardened general marshaling her bloodied and exhausted troops for a final push against a far superior foe.

Rubina is part of the Strixhaven Show Band Association and has moved from playing to conducting. No previous student conductor has demanded and received such unwavering respect as Rubina. With merely a look and a raised eyebrow, she can quiet even the most raucous orchestra sections.

Extracurriculars: Playactors Drama Guild, Strixhaven Show Band Association
Job: None
Bond Boon: Rubina's gravitas has rubbed off, and you can easily command an entire room's attention. They hear your words favorably if you wish.
Bond Bane: Whenever any band performs in public, its members stop and shake their heads in disapproval when they see you.

JESPER EJSING, LIE SETIAWAN



SHUVADRI GLINTMANTLE

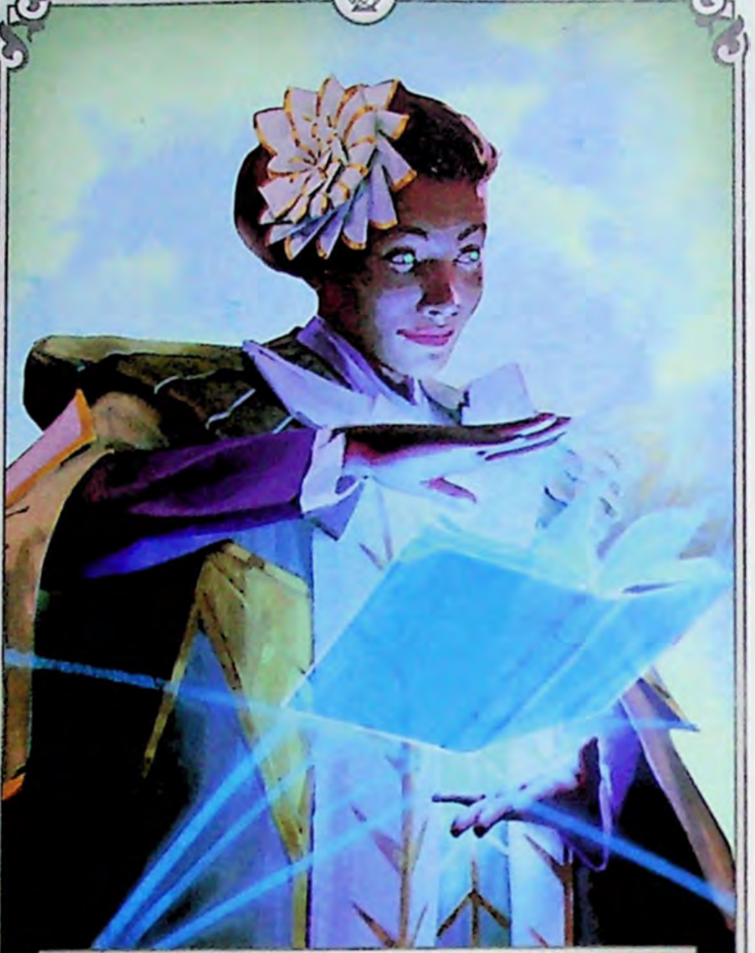
Lawful Good Owlin First Year (Silverquill)

Her peers are often surprised when they learn Shuvadri is interested in joining Silverquill College, since its members sometimes earn a reputation as abrasive. Shuvadri, on the other hand, exhibits an air of absolute serenity. Anything that might frustrate or delight another student, whether it's a poor test score or success at a competition, elicits little outward response from Shuvadri. A deep thinker, Shuvadri is rarely surprised by such an outcome, and she enjoys being a centering presence for her peers.

Also a member of the Student-Mages of Faith, Shuvadri is happy to talk about her appreciation of deities who are devoted to service and community. Many of her peers think she is destined to hold high rank in a temple.

Shuvadri works on the campus grounds to erase graffiti, wearing a content smile on her face.

Extracurriculars: Student-Mages of Faith
Job: Campus Grounds graffiti eraser
Bond Boon: If you quickly need the help of your peers, they drop everything to assist you as a favor to Shuvadri.
Bond Bane: Graffiti making rude allusions to you keeps appearing on campus, and it takes days to get cleaned.



TILANA KAPULE

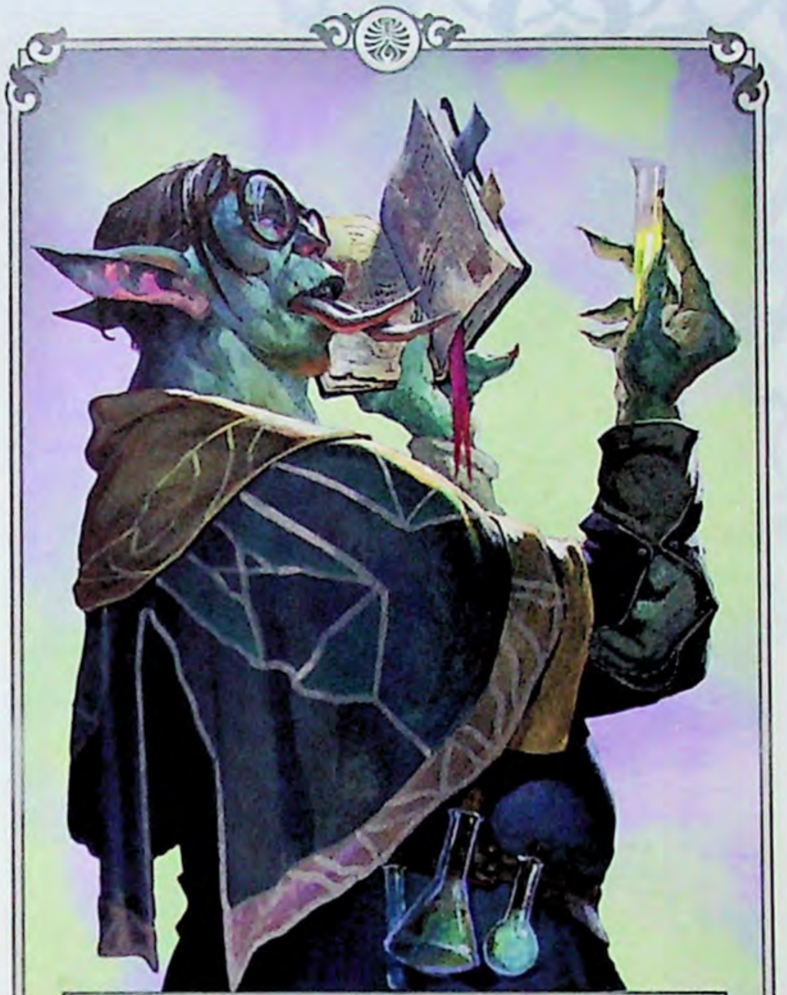
Neutral Good Human First Year (Quandrix)

Tilana's poised demeanor and steady gaze are remarkable. An excellent judge of character, she doesn't associate with those she deems mean-spirited. Her exacting judgment has led her to join the Dragonchess Club, and while she is still honing her skill at the game itself, she compensates by reading her opponent instead of the board. Many a foe has struggled to sit in silence as she gives them her full attention, probing for weaknesses, the pieces seemingly incidental.

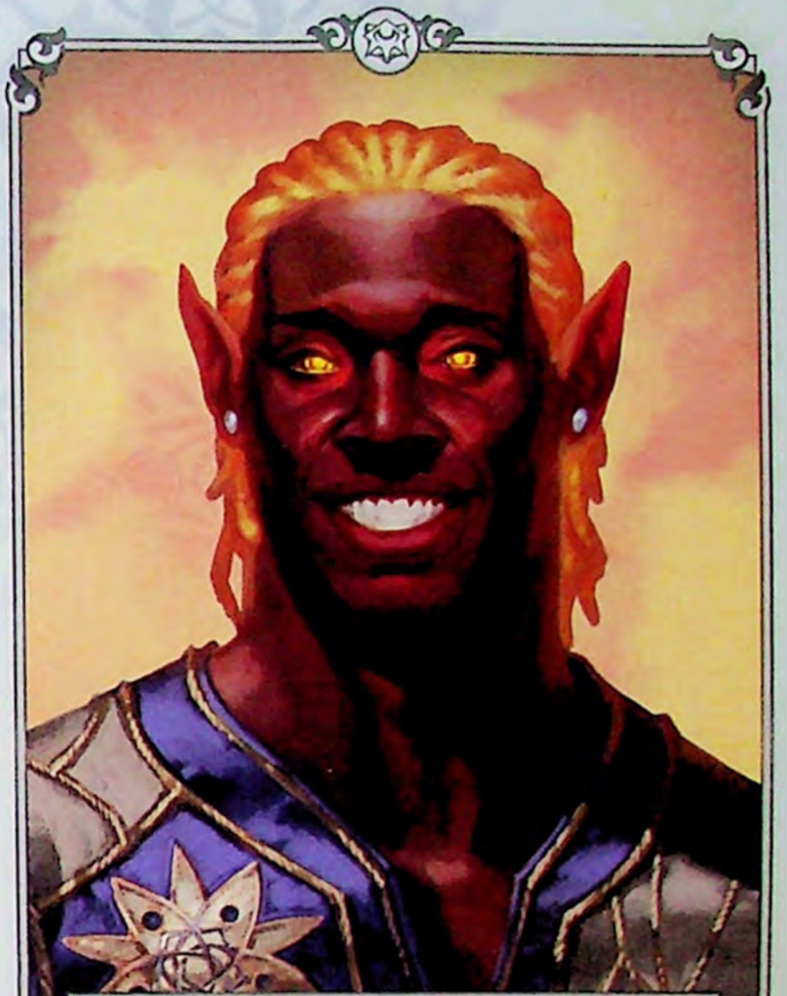
Surprising to some, Tilana has also joined the Intramural Silkball Club. During matches, she focuses on trying to understand and preempt the opposing sides' strategies. More than once she has suggested new plays mid-game that have caught the opposing team off guard. The faculty at Strixhaven are convinced that, if she wished, one day Tilana would make an excellent professor.

Extracurriculars: Dragonchess Club, Intramural Silkball Club
Job: None
Bond Boon: Tilana loves helping analyze problems. When you go to her for advice, she suggests a helpful solution that you hadn't considered.
Bond Bane: The faculty don't trust you or help you much, for rumor has it that Tilana has found you wanting.

RAOUL VITALE, VIKO MENEZES



URZMAKTOK GROJSH



ZANTHER BOWEN

Neutral Orc Second Year (Witherbloom)

First to class, last to leave, and always asking for additional homework, Urzmaktok is a meticulous student. Despite his consistently high marks, Urzmaktok makes no attempt to show off, although his studies seem rudimentary to him. Rumor has it that he is completing enough credits to earn multiple degrees when he graduates.

Urzmaktok works for the Campus Magic Labs as a specimen preparer. This additional access to the labs also allows him to run his personal experiments in peace. Unsurprisingly, he is also a member of the Fantastical Horticulture Club. There, he looks to develop new species of plants that might yield new ingredients for potions.

Urzmaktok makes it clear he wants everyone to use his full first name. Should anyone use a nickname, he won't acknowledge the address.

Extracurriculars: Fantastical Horticulture Club
Job: Campus Magic Labs specimen preparer
Bond Boon: No matter the subject, you can always find a partner to study with, whether it's Urzmaktok or a classmate doing him a favor.
Bond Bane: No one on campus who isn't another player character will study with you. If you ask, most shrug decline, saying you'll probably fail.

Chaotic Good Fire Genasi First Year (Prismari)

One of the most popular students on campus, Zanther is a member of the Mage Tower Cheer Squad, and his exceptional athleticism has earned him the position as the squad's primary flyer. As such, Zanther is launched into the air in elaborate cheering routines, much to the crowd's delight.

Zanther has also joined the Intramural Gymnastics Club. Here he completes at rhythmic gymnastics in both ribbon as well as hoop. To further test himself and impress the judges, Zanther conducts his routines to a vast array of different musical styles and arrangements. When traveling around campus between classes, he shouts random affirmations of school spirit to everyone at large. Despite his peppy nature, Zanther is genuinely encouraging and in no way acts superior. If anything, he seems somewhat oblivious to his own popularity at Strixhaven.

Extracurriculars: Intramural Gymnastics Club, Mage Tower Cheer Squad
Job: None
Bond Boon: You enjoy a high social rank as a result of your association with Zanther. Most of your peers fall all over themselves to do you favors.
Bond Bane: No one on campus invites you to parties or events, although your friends receive invitations.

JESPER EJSING, OLGA DREBAS

CAMPUS KERFUFFLE

The day has finally arrived! Your players' characters have moved to campus, have picked up their tomes and uniforms, and are about to embark on their academic careers at Strixhaven University.

In this adventure, the characters explore campus as first-year students. They'll navigate orientation at the Biblioplex and settle into social life in rowdy gathering spots. They'll get roped into a thrilling dare. They'll watch—and maybe even take part in—an outdoor play and discover something jarring in a marsh adjacent to the campus. And along the way, hints of something sinister emerge. Danger crops up in the most unassuming places, and the characters must rise to the occasion. Will they become campus heroes? Or will these kerfuffles explode into something that threatens all of Strixhaven?

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

Here's what you need to know to run the adventure in this chapter, whether you're running it as part of an ongoing campaign or as a standalone adventure.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

This adventure assumes the characters are 1st level when it begins. The First-Year Level Advancement table summarizes when the characters gain levels during the adventure.

FIRST-YEAR LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

Level	Reached When Characters ...
2nd	Complete the first Magical Physiologies Exam
3rd	Complete the "Campus Daredevils" section and explore Captain Dapplewing's Manor
4th	Finish the adventure

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The strange happenings on campus in this adventure are caused by a corrupted substance known as eldritch balm. Used at Strixhaven for decades, eldritch balm is an alchemical salve made from the sludgy, acidic waters of Sedgemoor, the bayou that encompasses the Witherbloom College campus. Once these waters undergo an alchemical process in Witherbloom's faculty laboratories, the resulting eldritch balm is used to magically treat and strengthen objects, from storage trunks to cooking vats to stage props and more. The balm's effects differ depending on the objects treated, but it typically provides resistance to certain types of damage or other protections useful on a campus where magic often goes awry.

Unknown to anyone on campus, Sedgemoor's waters were recently corrupted by the foul magic practiced by Murgaxor Grenshel, the villain the characters ultimately confront in chapter 6. Murgaxor intended the eldritch balm to be affected by his sinister experiments and hoped the resulting chaos would disrupt life at Strixhaven.

A STANDALONE ADVENTURE

If you're running this chapter's adventure as a standalone, the corruption of Sedgemoor's waters is not the result of a sinister plot. Rather, a surge of wild magic caused the corruption, but the outcome is the same.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Use the First-Year Encounters table for random encounters on campus during this adventure.

FIRST-YEAR ENCOUNTERS

d10	Encounter
1–4	2 **stirges** and 1 **giant rat**, both of which were attracted to a nearby sickly scent and are hostile
5–6	2 suits of **animated armor** that look like dusty, armored wizard robes
7–8	1 **ochre jelly** that has bits of chewed scrolls and shards of potion bottles in its oozy mass
9–10	1 **basilisk** wearing a monocle and top hat that has escaped and is aggressive, although a student tried to keep it as a pet

STUDENT SCHEDULES

Before starting this adventure, have the players choose at least three courses their characters are taking this year, either by coming up with the courses themselves or by rolling on the First-Year Courses table. Inform them that the characters are also enrolled in a required course, Magical Physiologies.

FIRST-YEAR COURSES

d6	Course	Offered By
1	Arcano-botany for Beginners	Witherbloom
2	Basic Magical Auras	General Studies
3	Beginning Computational Magic	Quandrix
4	Beginning Inkomancy	Silverquill
5	History of Magic and Art	Prismari
6	Introduction to Archaeomancy	Lorehold

Some Strixhaven students take studying very seriously. Others would rather play with magic in the Biblioplex.

First Day on Campus

This adventure begins when students have arrived on Strixhaven's campus and the term's classes are about to start. For the characters, the first order of business is to complete the orientation required of first-year students. Orientation takes place in the Biblioplex, the university's grand library. A full description of the Biblioplex follows this section.

Orientation

Before you begin play, show the players the Strixhaven poster map that accompanies this book so they have an understanding of how the university is laid out.

With the characters arrive at the Biblioplex, read or paraphrase the following:

> Majestic marble archways, tomes seemingly stacked for miles, and the infectious energy of hundreds of young adults fill the Biblioplex, the grand library at the heart of Strixhaven University. The sights, sounds, and sparks of magic in the air are wondrous.

EKATERINA BURMAK

> Your acceptance letter stated that you must report to the Biblioplex's Hall of Oracles to receive instructions on new-student orientation. The hall sits at the center of the Biblioplex's first floor, and you can already see students gathering there.

Orientation instructions are given in the Hall of Oracles every few minutes, so let the players know that their characters can explore the Biblioplex further before heading over. If the characters choose to explore before orientation, make sure they see other new students engaging in their own versions of the scavenger hunt, each unique to that set of students (see "Orientation Challenge" later in this chapter).

Strixhaven Knowledge

The characters know the basics about the Strixhaven campus, as well as the following information:

Central Campus. The Biblioplex isn't the only building on the central campus, where students spend a lot of time. Two other popular locations are Firejolt Café and Bow's End Tavern, whose maps are found later in this chapter.

Many students employ deep concentration techniques to help them tackle their rigorous class schedules.

Colleges. Characters know the overall details presented in chapter 1 about the five colleges that make up Strixhaven. They also know that each Strixhaven student chooses membership in a specific college at the start of their second year.

Biblioplex

The Biblioplex library acts as a hub for learning and gathering for students across Strixhaven. Before the characters begin the "Orientation Challenge" event described later, they might wish to explore the library, shown on map 3.1.

Biblioplex Features

The Biblioplex has the following features:

Ceilings. The ceilings throughout the first floor of the Biblioplex are 50 feet high. The second- and third-floor ceilings are 30 feet high.

Magic Stairs. As in all Strixhaven buildings, the stairs and steps leading into and within the Biblioplex are enchanted to move and reshape for full accessibility. See the "Strixhaven Accessibility" sidebar.

Transport Circles. A runic circle is painted on the floor near each staircase in the Biblioplex, as well as at the top and bottom of the steps leading to the main entrance in area B1. These circles are permanent, customized teleportation circles. When a user moves onto a circle and mentally focuses on the floor to which they wish to travel, they are transported to the destination floor, arriving at that floor's runic circle for that staircase. (Students are all aware that entering the second floor is forbidden without permission from a faculty member.) The circle at the bottom of the front steps transports users to the circle at the top of the steps and vice versa.

Strixhaven Accessibility

The buildings on campus feature magic steps and staircases that respond to the needs of those who use them. The steps might shift up or down like escalators, or they might flatten out completely before raising or lowering like lifts to accommodate larger creatures and mobility devices, depending on users' needs.

In certain multistory buildings (including the Biblioplex and Captain Dapplewing's Manor), magic transport circles also allow characters quick access between different levels.

Students and Professors. Students of all years and colleges can be found in the Biblioplex, as can professors from all the colleges. See chapter 7 for stat blocks for first-year students, and for apprentices, pledgemages, and professors from the different colleges.

Biblioplex Locations

The following locations are keyed to map 3.1. All descriptions assume the characters are wandering the Biblioplex during the day. At night, the library is locked and devoid of other students or staff.

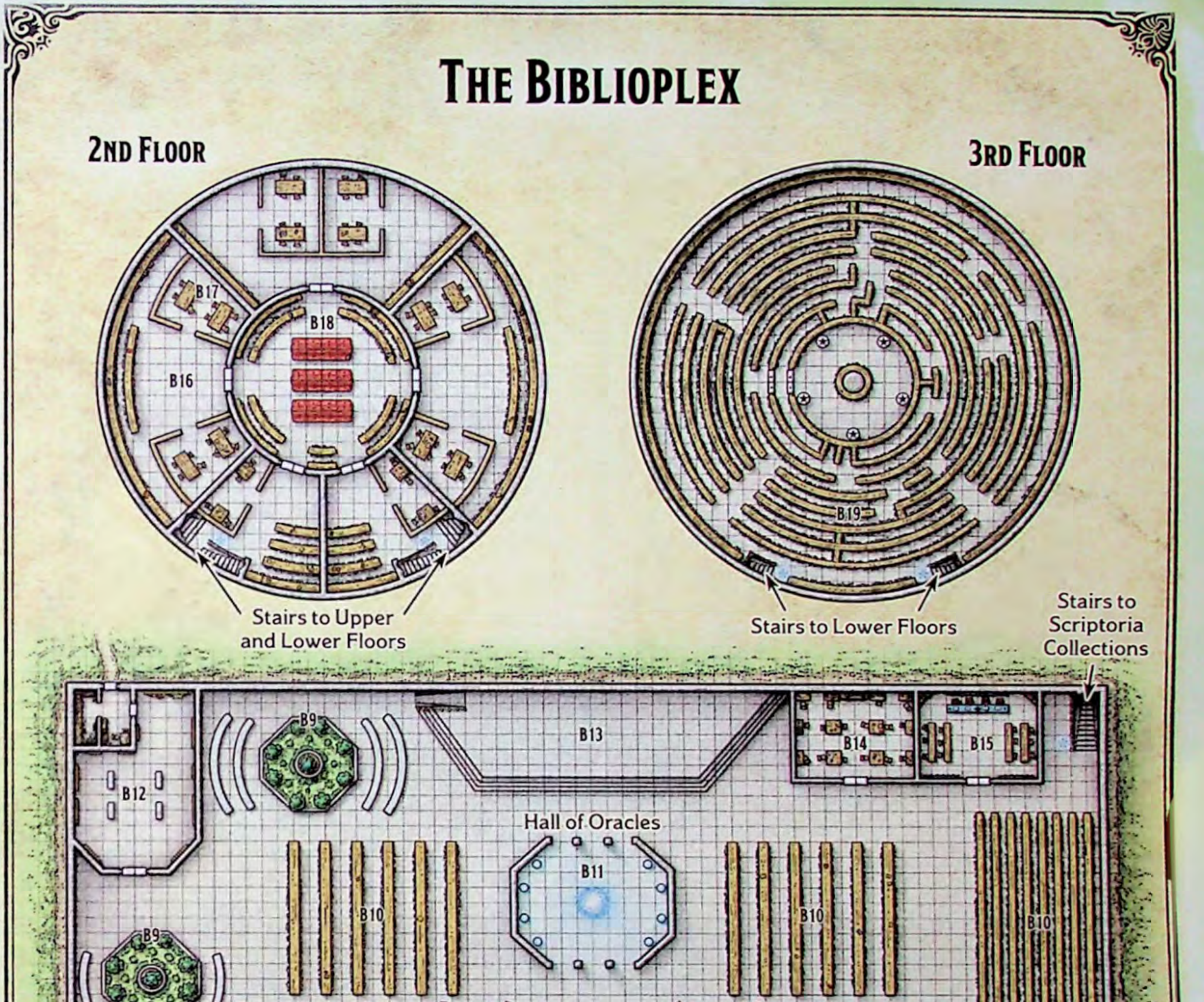
B1. Main Entrance

Enchanted marble steps lead up 5 feet to a small plaza at the Biblioplex's entrance. The double door's vertical handles are each carved in the likeness of a robed scholar. During the day, the doors stand open. At night, the doors are closed, locked, and sealed with an *arcane lock* spell. A successful DC 25 Dexterity check using thieves' tools opens the lock (DC 35 while the *arcane lock* is in effect). Only the Biblioplex's reference librarians and certain faculty members know the *arcane lock*'s password.

B2. Biblioplex Lounge

Luxurious couches and sturdy tables furnish this spacious area. Students, employees, and staff members often use this lounge to relax between shifts in the student store (area B5), the Biblioplex café (area B6), or elsewhere in the library. Each table holds piles of magazines, newsletters, flyers, and nonmagical scrolls from around campus. A character who examines these materials finds recruitment flyers from 1d3 Extracurriculars. They also find "Help Wanted" ads for the Jobs at the Biblioplex. Extracurriculars and Jobs are detailed earlier in the chapter.

CRISTI BALANESCU


THE BIBLIOPLEX
2ND FLOOR
3RD FLOOR
B16
B17
B18
B19
Stairs to Upper and Lower Floors
Stairs to Lower Floors
Stairs to Scriptoria Collections
B9
B12
B13
B14
B15
Hall of Oracles
B11
B10
B9
B10
B10
B8
B8
B7
B7
B7
B7
B4
B5
B4
B6
1ST FLOOR
B2
B3
Stairs to Upper Floors
Stairs to Upper Floors
B1
N
W
E
S
1 square = 5 feet

MIKE SCHLEY

Map 3.1: The Biblioplex

B3. STUDENT CAFÉ SEATING

This area typically holds 21 (6d6) students, all of them studying, eating, chatting, or even sleeping. Many enjoy food and drinks from the café (area B6).

B4. INFORMATION DESK

Three faculty-appointed reference librarians work at each of these circular desks (use any of the professor stat blocks found in chapter 7 if needed). All are expert scholars and powerful mages. They can provide helpful instructions for where to find any public location or collection in the Biblioplex.

B5. STUDENT STORE

This small shop is stocked with books, equipment, and gear useful as academic supplies. The store's manager is Groff Lundquist (neutral good human **commoner**), a friendly Strixhaven staff member known for his ability to fashionably mix and match items of university apparel. Students can buy hats, scarves, tunics, robes, gloves, and other apparel embroidered with the Strixhaven star or with the sigil of any of Strixhaven's colleges. Costs range from 5 cp to 5 gp or more, at your discretion.

Once a character chooses a college at the start of second year, they receive a set of college robes, a knit hat, a scarf, a tunic, and gloves free of charge. (This set normally costs 5 gp.)

In addition to nonmagical gear and clothing, the store also contains the magic items from the "Magic Items" section of chapter 2.

B6. BIBLIOPLEX CAFÉ

One wall of this area is covered with a mural made from a living tree's roots, which move occasionally and make the entire place feel alive. The ceiling is covered in painted leaves, which change colors depending on the season thanks to a permanent illusion effect. The magic also prompts painted squirrels to run up and down the mural's roots, and painted birds to chirp among the leaves.

Up to ten students are typically present here during the day. Ordinarily, three more students work here, but during orientation, the café's manager, Aisla Fitzbottom (chaotic good gnome **commoner**), is working alone. She is charmingly perky and has a mind like a steel trap when it comes to recognizing students. However, her organizational skills are somewhat lackadaisical.

The café always serves coffee and tea, which costs 1 cp per cup. The sandwich of the day varies. Roll below to determine which sandwich is available on any given day in the café.

CAFÉ SANDWICH OF THE DAY

d6	Sandwich
1	Grilled halloumi with morels on wheat
2	Toasted cockatrice gizzards on rye
3	Open-faced radish chips, deep-fried with dijon
4	Crunchy frog legs on toast
5	Rainbow carrots and watercress chestnuts on white
6	Dragonbreath peppers and salami on a bagel

B7. LECTURE HALL

Each of these halls hosts interdisciplinary lectures for Strixhaven students. The seats magically grow or shrink to comfortably accommodate students of any size or body type. The halls' acoustics are magically enhanced to amplify the professor's lecture and minimize the disruption of side conversations. While a class is in session, each hall holds a professor and up to thirty students.

B8. STUDY AREA

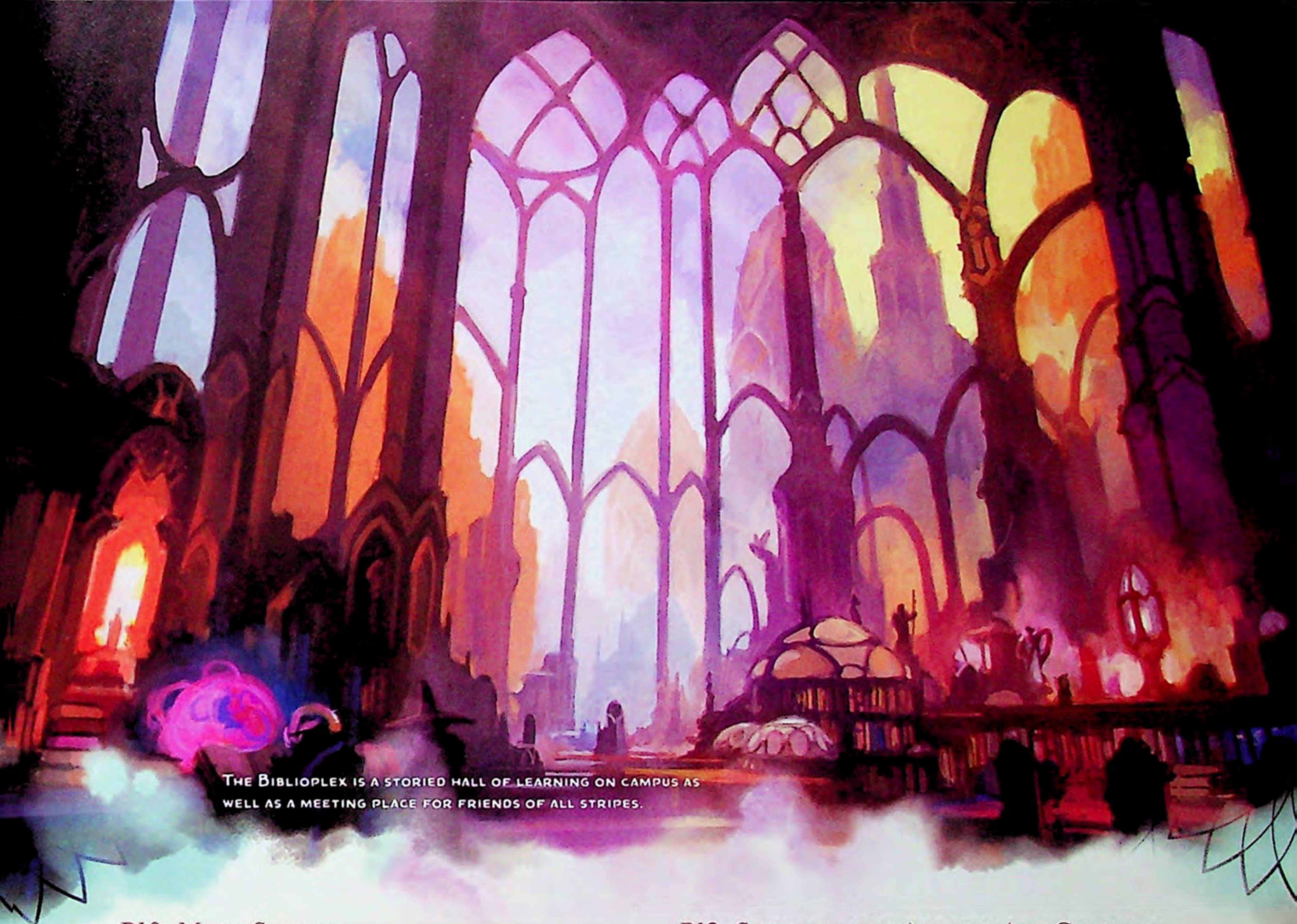
These open study areas feature simple wooden tables and chairs. During the day, up to thirty students can typically be found here.

If the characters pass by the western study area before orientation, members of the Live-Action Roleplaying Guild are pulling costumes and props from a half dozen old trunks. The guild is preparing for an event later on the Biblioplex's lawn: a game they call Beholders versus Behirs. Rosie Wuzfeddlims (chaotic good gnome **first-year student**; see the "Fellow Students" section) is directing students as they cobble together beholder and behir costumes, as well as visual effects made from sheets, blankets, wooden frames, tin plates, and illusion magic. (This preparation erupts into chaos during "That Trunk Has Teeth!" later in this chapter.)

B9. BOOK GARDEN

In these quiet areas, students sit on the grass and study among lush foliage. Sometime last year, three **awakened shrubs** wandered in here and settled in each garden, and the university has welcomed them to stay. Members of Witherbloom College typically tend this space, and three **Witherbloom pledgemages** (see chapter 7) can be found here most days.

Members of the Fantastical Horticulture Club often relax in this area and hold meetings here from time to time. If the characters explore this area before or after orientation, Urzmaktok Grojsh (neutral orc **Witherbloom apprentice**; see the "Fellow Students" section) is here, recruiting first-year students to the club.



THE BIBLIOPLEX IS A STORIED HALL OF LEARNING ON CAMPUS AS WELL AS A MEETING PLACE FOR FRIENDS OF ALL STRIPES.

B10. Main Stacks

Floor-to-ceiling bookshelves fill the center and the east end of the library's first floor, with the denser east stacks under a magic effect that shifts them when students approach, creating space to stand single-file between them. These books are mostly introductory texts, and first-year students are often directed here by their instructors. In each of these areas, two **cogwork archivists** (see chapter 7) busily shelve returned or misfiled books.

Characters who browse these shelves unaided stumble on what they need with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. However, it's always easier to ask a reference librarian (area B4).

B11. Hall of Oracles

This hallowed hall is filled with statues of the university's past Oracles. At the center of the hall, a pulsing ball of magical energy—the Strixhaven Snarl—fills the area with bright light. See the book's introduction for information about snarls and the Oracle.

The "Orientation Challenge" event later in this chapter starts here.

B12. Student and Alumni Art Gallery

This crisp-looking room features white walls and columns that stretch from floor to ceiling. Displayed on or within these are art pieces representative of various media. Students from Prismari College typically tend this space, and three **Prismari pledgemages** (see chapter 7) can be found here most days, either cleaning the gallery or studying the techniques used in the displayed pieces. A storage area at the back holds supplies and artwork waiting to go on display.

The Distinguished Society of Fine Artists often meets and holds discussions here. If the characters explore this area before or after orientation, Cadoras Damellawar (chaotic good elf **first-year student**; see the "Fellow Students" section) is here recruiting first-year students to the society.

B13. Amphitheater

This impressive stage is used for lectures, for assemblies, and as a gathering place in case of emergencies. Magic steps lead up to the stage from the floor of the library. Members of the Playactors Drama Guild often use this stage to meet

ANDREAS ROCHA

and rehearse when the Rose Stage on Silverquill's campus is unavailable. If the characters pass by this area before or after orientation, Quentillius Antiphiun Melentor III (neutral human **first-year student**; see the "Fellow Students" section) is here recruiting new students to the Playactors Drama Guild.

B14. STUDENT ACTIVITIES CENTER

This room is filled with tables and chairs and is available to any student organization registered with Strixhaven for use as a meeting place, rehearsal facility, or crafting site, or for other approved purposes.

If the characters explore this area before or after orientation, it is set up to promote Extracurriculars, the rules of which appear earlier in the chapter. The tables are covered with flyers from the Dead Languages Society, the Dragonchess Club, the Dragonsguard Historical Society, Future Entrepreneurs of Strixhaven, the Intramural Gymnastics Club, the Intramural Silkball Club, the Intramural Water-Dancing Club, the Mage Tower Cheer Squad, the Strixhaven Iron-Lifters Society, the Strixhaven Show Band Association, the *Strixhaven Star*, and Student-Mages of Faith, and are staffed by the students listed in "Extracurriculars" as being associated with them.

Extracurricular groups not here can be found elsewhere in the Biblioplex, along with their student NPCs—the Live-Action Roleplaying Guild (area B8), the Fantastical Horticulture Club (area B9), the Distinguished Society of Fine Artists (area B12), and the Playactors Drama Guild (area B13).

B15. STUDENT COUNCIL HALL

Filled with wooden tables and benches, this room has a flag displaying the Strixhaven star symbol hanging on its back wall. Here, a student council publicly debates Strixhaven policies that most affect the student body. The leaders of the school's Extracurriculars come to the council to conduct matters of business, and the council usually meets on the first day of every month. Outside those meeting days, the room is used for other official university business or stands empty.

B16. ADVANCED STUDENT STACKS

Rooms on the Biblioplex's second floor can be accessed only with keys held by faculty members, or that the reference librarians in area B4 grant students on a case-by-case basis. Typically, students don't receive keys to these stacks until they're studying for their final thesis during their fourth year at Strixhaven. The arcane knowledge in the books here is not public—and is sometimes dangerous.

To prevent overly ambitious mages and Strixhaven's enemies from teleporting into and accessing this area, two **shield guardians** patrol at all times. Both the guardians have *sleep* as their stored spell, and their control amulets are in the possession of two of the librarians on duty in the Biblioplex. Students with permission to work here are given passwords by which the Constructs recognize them as friends.

B17. ADVANCED STUDENT OFFICE

These private offices are for students working on their theses, accessed using the same keys that allow access to area B16.

B18. ADVANCED STUDENT LOUNGE

This rest area is designed to help stressed-out senior students unwind. Large tables are set up for gaming and shelves are filled with recreational reading material. The area can be accessed only through the advanced student stacks (area B17).

B19. THE COMPENDIUM

This area on the library's third floor holds copies of most of the mundane, widely available written works in the multiverse. The books are inscrutably cataloged, so it's almost impossible to find anything without requesting information from a reference librarian (area B4). Characters who look for information without obtaining help discover what they're looking for only with a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check.

At the center of this area stands a statue depicting a mighty, benevolent dragon. The magical statue reads aloud the contents of most books placed in front of it if a character makes that request verbally or mentally. (The magic of the statue can assess text such as verbal curses that present a danger if read aloud, and the statue ignores requests to read such text.)

ORIENTATION CHALLENGE

When the characters enter the Hall of Oracles to begin orientation, read or paraphrase the following:

> An almost sacrosanct sense of calm descends as you step into the Hall of Oracles. "Brilliant scholars," says a rich, soothing voice radiating from the hall's central snarl of glowing energy. "Your attention, please.
>
> "As you are now Strixhaven University students, this storied Biblioplex will be your second home for research, studies, and even leisure. There is just one task to accomplish before you officially embark on your academic journey—a scavenger hunt!"

A small parchment materializes in front of the characters. It presents a list of clues.

Cleaning up after students is often a harried undertaking. Luckily, the many Biblioplex assistants are up to the task.

> "The rules are simple," the voice says. "Each clue on this list will lead you to a different location in the Biblioplex. Simply travel to the area each clue references and perform the action the clue suggests. Time is of the essence. You have only until the end of the day to finish your hunt.
>
> "Solve as many clues as you can, because at each location, you may win a prize! Now then, off you go!"

Scavenger Hunt Clues

A character can win a prize for each clue they solve but can receive only one item in each place. If a character tries to redo a clue to receive a second item, the magic that reveals the item doesn't work again. Here are the clues:

Clue 1. You'll forget all about any trouble or plight when you step forward and are ensnarled in light.

Clue 2. Alumni commission works when they retire, seeking promising mages to inspire.

Clue 3. Each group deserves a free treat for their investment. Serve up this list and enjoy your refreshment.

Clue 4. These leafy beds aren't always what they seem. Give them a pat and see what you glean.

Clue 5. Some stars are ancient, enduring, and bright. But others—maybe you!—are born on opening night.

Each clue can be unraveled either by deduction, or with a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check. A decoded clue points the characters toward one of the areas of the Biblioplex as well as the action they must take to receive a prize in that area.

Running the Hunt

Explain the Biblioplex's areas in detail before the characters begin this scavenger hunt, so they have an idea of which areas the clues point to. Have the characters begin the scavenger hunt with the first clue, since it points to the room they're already standing in. The players can then complete the other clues in any order they wish.

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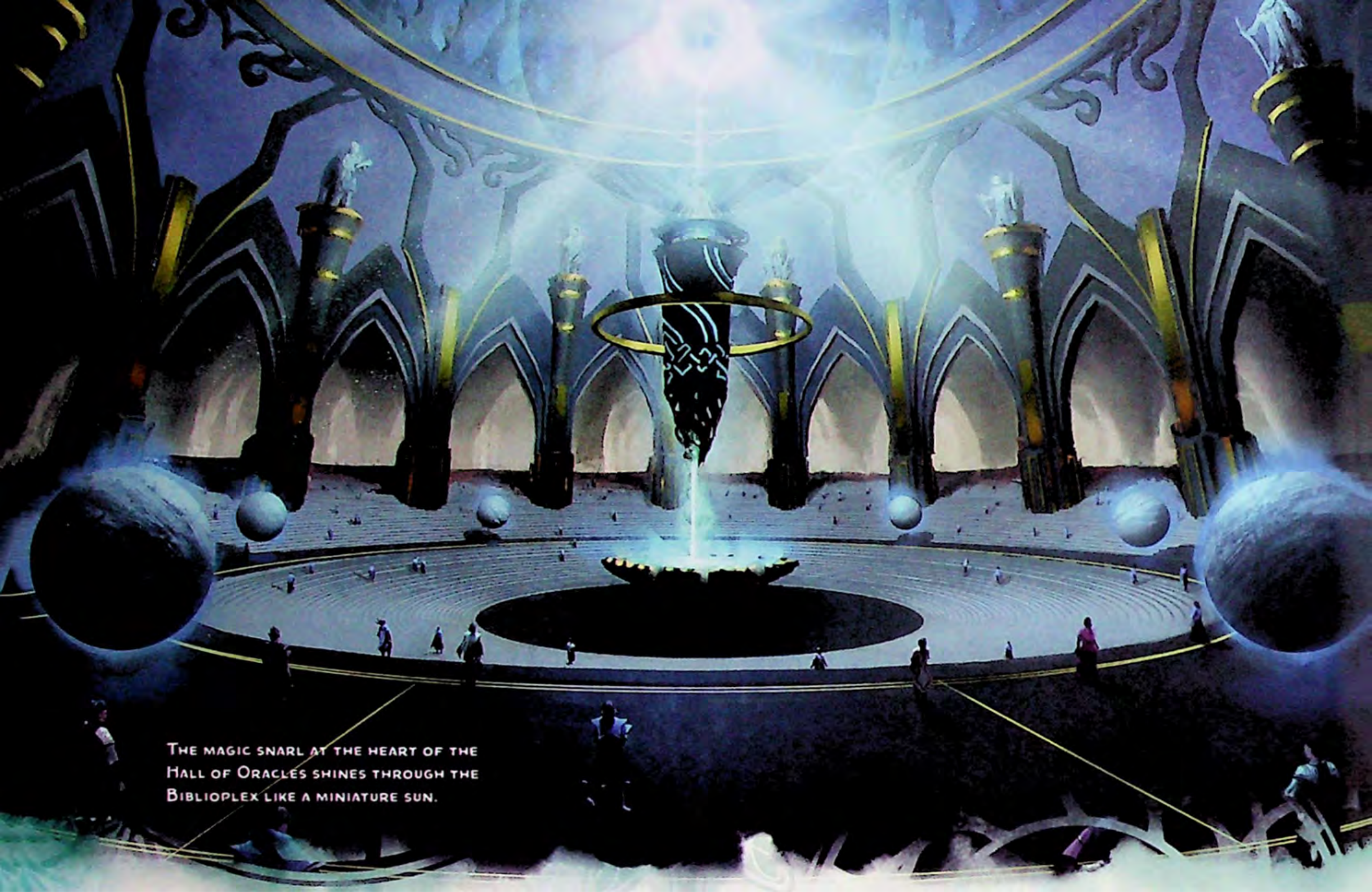


The magic snarl at the heart of the Hall of Oracles shines through the Biblioplex like a miniature sun.

Clue 1: Hall of Oracles

This clue refers the characters to the room they start the orientation in (area B11).

If a character touches the pooled energy below the snarl, they momentarily lose track of their body, overwhelmed by the snarl's magical power. The character automatically disengages from the snarl and discovers that they are holding a *potion of healing*.

Clue 2: Student Art Gallery

This clue refers to the Student and Alumni Art Gallery in area B12.

When the characters wander through the gallery, they see a portrait of several older alumni wearing Prismari College robes. If a character examines the portrait, they find a plaque that reads: "At Strixhaven we were all inspired." Below the plaque is a small lever. If a character uses an action to pull the lever, a box pops out of the wall containing a *Strixhaven pennant* (see chapter 2) for each character in the party. Once it dispenses the pennants, the box disappears back into the wall and doesn't work for the characters again.

Clue 3: Biblioplex Café

This clue refers to the Biblioplex Café in area B6.

When the characters enter the café, they see several students enjoying drinks and snacks. Aisla Fitzbottom (chaotic good gnome **commoner**), the café manager, is a Strixhaven staff member and the only worker behind the counter at present. The characters must present their scavenger hunt list to Aisla. When they do, she tells them to come behind the counter and help her quickly restock the café's sandwiches and baked goods from several modified *Heward's handy haversacks*.

If a character goes above and beyond in their assistance with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check, Aisla gives that character a random trinket from chapter 2. Many students have ignored her requests for help during the orientation, she says, so she decides to make an exception with a gift from her own pockets. Plus, she likes the new students' ambition.

PIOTR DURA

CLUE 4: BOOK GARDEN

This clue refers to the book gardens of area B9.

When the characters enter a book garden, they see a lush arboretum. A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that three of the shrubs are not ordinary greenery, but are instead **awakened shrubs**, each with a glistening crown of leaves. If a character uses an action to pat the shrubs on these leaves, the branches part to reveal a *cuddly Strixhaven mascot* (see chapter 2), representing a random mascot. This magic works only once per character.

CLUE 5: AMPHITHEATER

This clue refers to the amphitheater in area B13.

When the characters reach the amphitheater, they see an impressively lavish stage, with the curtains drawn back as if to reveal performers on the opening night of a major production. If a character recites, sings, hums, belches, or otherwise emits any line or tune while standing on the stage, bright floodlights snap on around the stage's perimeter—a number of lights equal to the number of characters in the group. Approaching any of the lights reveals a recess in which lies a hooded lantern filled with oil.

THAT TRUNK HAS TEETH!

Once the characters have completed as much of the scavenger hunt as they wish, they hear a commotion coming from the west shelves of the main stacks in area B10. Read or paraphrase the following:

> The joyous and energetic atmosphere of the first floor is shattered by panicked shouting.
>
> "That trunk!" a young elf screams, pointing toward the stacks as she runs by. "That trunk has teeth! Please, anyone, stop it!"
>
> Chaos erupts in the library as students stream in all directions, their books and papers flying as they shout in fear. The only faculty mages in sight are trying to deal with panicked students. You can't just let some monster ruin the first day of classes. Time to step up!

In the western part of area B8, the characters see a half dozen old trunks strewn about. Sheets, blankets, large wooden frames, and half-painted wooden props are scattered haphazardly around the tables where members of the Live-Action Roleplaying Guild were setting up for a show. Rampaging throughout the mess is a trunk that has been transformed into a **mimic**, which attacks the characters as soon as they enter the area. Because the mimic is only temporarily animated, it has the following changes to its stat block:

- It has 30 hit points.
- It has disadvantage on attack rolls.

Once it's defeated, the mimic turns back into an ordinary trunk.

ENDING THE THREAT

If all the characters fall unconscious during the fight, Professor Mavinda Sharpbeak (neutral good owlin **Silverquill professor of radiance**; see chapter 7) arrives on the scene at the start of the next round and finishes off the mimic. If the characters defeat the mimic, Professor Sharpbeak arrives on the scene shortly after the group dispatches it. She carries a bag of *potions of healing*, which she administers to any injured or unconscious characters.

A guidance counselor at Strixhaven, Professor Sharpbeak was overseeing the orientation activities, but the mass of fleeing students prevented her from responding to the incident immediately. When she has assisted any wounded characters, she introduces herself.

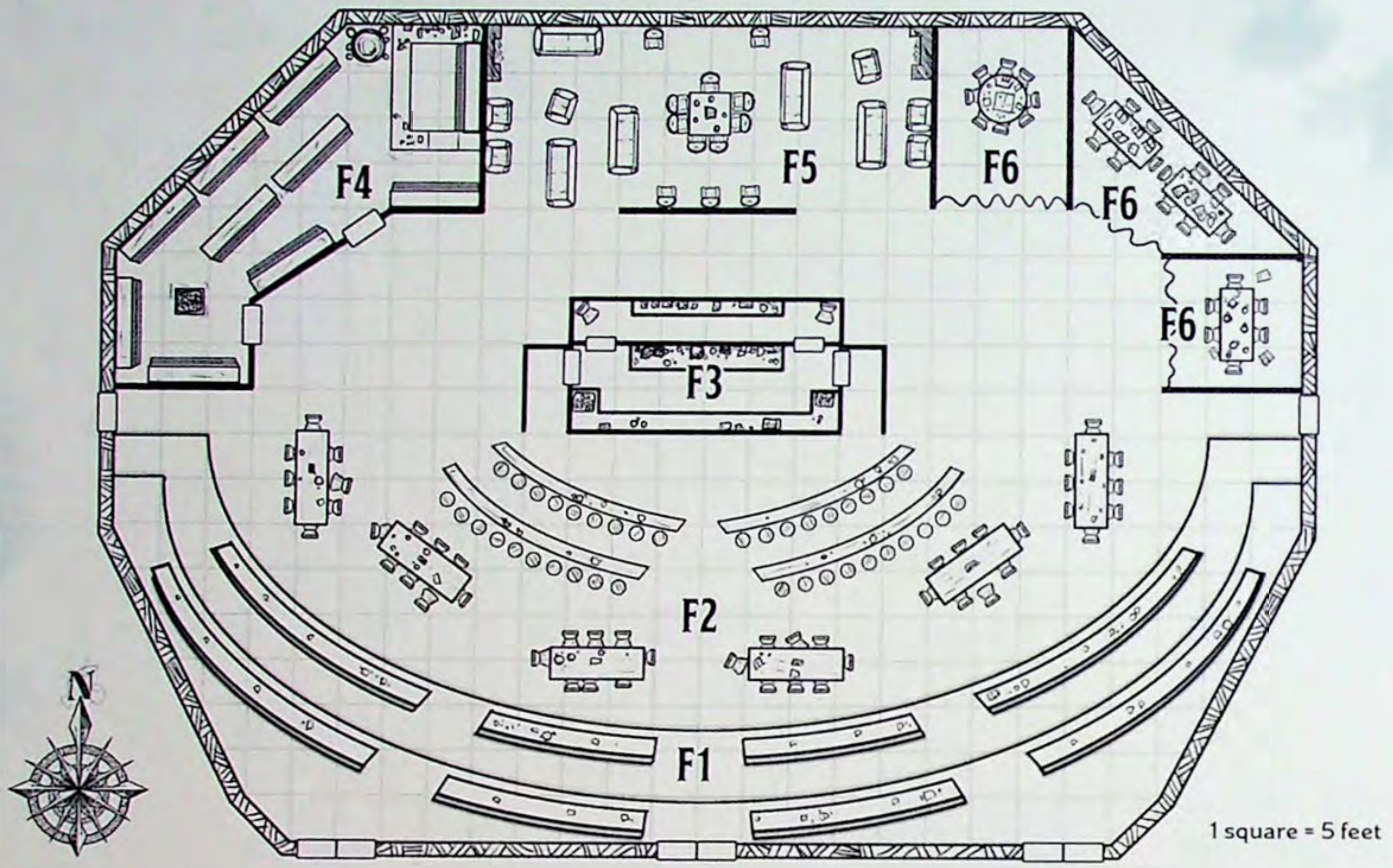
> "Students, well done!" Professor Sharpbeak exclaims, ruffling her feathers with pride. "Such bravery in this incoming class! And what a bizarre occurrence. I can't remember any of those old costume trunks ever bearing a hint of magic—let alone that manner of transmutation. I will be having a word with the equipment managers over at the Rose Stage. They're supposed to keep this sort of thing from happening!"

If the characters chat with the professor, she reassures them that this was an unfortunate incident—but sadly, not an unheard-of one, since strange monsters often find their way onto campus. Still, it's nothing to worry about. Before she goes, she reaches into her bag and gives each character 1 platinum piece, thanking them again for their help and welcoming them to campus.

EXAMINING THE TRUNK

Characters who examine the mimic and succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notice that the defeated trunk's wood and leather has been rubbed with a black, oily substance. If asked about this, Professor Sharpbeak says it's likely just a leather conditioner. With no magic remaining in the eldritch balm to reveal the contamination, she has no explanation for why the trunk temporarily turned into a mimic and attacked.

FIREJOLT CAFÉ



Map 3.2: Firejolt Café

Frog's the Word

At some point during the weeks that follow their orientation day and the start of classes, the characters are hanging out together on the central campus. Another student is part of this scene—ideally a student the characters have interacted with, or you may choose another student from the "Fellow Students" section.

When you're ready to begin this event, read or paraphrase the following, altering the text to incorporate the student's name or other details:

> Murmurs of excited curiosity ripple through the clusters of students around you, and another student suddenly barrels toward you, laughing uproariously.

Seeing no faculty nearby, the student beckons to the characters.

> "You've all got to see this!" the student chortles. "We found these weird frogs and snuck them into the Fireside Lounge at Firejolt Café, and now we're going to race the little hoppers! Quick! Come see before the professors find out!"

The characters are meant to join the festivities in the nearby Firejolt Café. If a player or character expresses reluctance, mention as motivation that other students the characters have interacted with during this adventure are already there.

Firejolt Café

Firejolt Café is the most popular place at Strixhaven to grab tea or coffee, chat with friends, or study among the hustle and bustle of a typical day on campus. The café's interior is clean and well lit, and its walls are decorated with fun, cartoonish scenes animated by permanent illusion magic. Well-known scenes include a jovial frog in a wizard's hat stirring a cauldron, a dancing trio of lightning bolts with grinning faces, and a raven wearing a cravat and sipping daintily from a cup of coffee held in one wing.

Firejolt Café Features

The café has the following features:

Ceilings. The café's ceilings are 20 feet high.

Doors. At night, the exterior doors to the café are closed, locked, and sealed with an *arcane lock* spell. A successful DC 25 Dexterity check using thieves' tools opens the lock (DC 35 while the *arcane lock* is in effect). Only certain faculty mem-

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bers and Ellina Tanglewood, the café's manager (see area F3), know the *arcane lock*'s password.

Magic Steps. The steps marking the edge of each tier of the study area are enchanted to move and reshape themselves for full accessibility. See the "Strixhaven Accessibility" sidebar.

Students. Students of all years and colleges can be found in Firejolt Café. See chapter 7 for stat blocks for first-year students, and for apprentices and pledgemages from the different colleges.

FIREJOLT CAFÉ LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to map 3.2. All descriptions assume the characters are in the café during the day. At night, the café is locked and devoid of students and staff.

F1. STUDY TABLES

These long benches sit atop two raised tiers with magic steps between them, affording easy access to the seating area below. Some thirty students are typically here during the day, studying quietly.

F2. SEATING AREA

This area is usually more crowded than the café's study tables. At least fifty students sit sociably in groups, chatting and having tea and coffee. The open spaces in the north part of this area are typically filled with students waiting to join the queue at the barista station or scouting for a good place to sit.

F3. BARISTA STATION

This bustling service counter is the demesne of Ellina Tanglewood (chaotic good elf **mage**), the Strixhaven employee who manages the café and serves as its chief barista. Ellina typically works alongside five older student employees, one from each college, though she sometimes hires younger students who express interest in working for her (see the "Jobs" section earlier in the chapter).

The front counter of the barista station is a whirl of chaos while Ellina and the other employees deal with the orders of dozens of students and faculty members. The back of the station is calmer, and includes a small break area for employees as well as shelves for personal belongings and café supplies.

The café strictly sells coffee and tea, but Ellina and the other talented baristas can make nearly any form of those drinks on request. A relatively common coffee or tea costs 1 cp, while a more complicated order might cost 2 cp. The café's signature firejolt latte costs 10 gp; it confers resistance to fire for 1 minute after drinking it, and it can be brewed only by Ellina using her fire magic.

F4. NEWSSTAND

This small store inside Firejolt Café sells magazines, knickknacks, posters, stickers, and other decorative and leisure items. The subjects of the magazines are all magic themed, with titles ranging from *Mages Monthly* to *Potions! Potions! Potions!* to *Spells and Caster.* Staff members at the barista station take turns working the newsstand, which sometimes closes when the café is particularly busy. Most items here cost 1 cp, though higher-end items might be available at your discretion.

F5. FIRESIDE LOUNGE

Much more comfortable than the café's other seating areas, this lounge is filled with sofas and armchairs where students can relax away from the hubbub. Fireplaces in the northern corners are lit by *continual flame* spells. Some twenty students are typically found here, using the tables to study quietly.

F6. QUIET ROOM

As with the fireside lounge, these rooms are quieter than the café's main seating areas. However, with large tables and more functional chairs, they're more oriented toward studying and completing classwork. Up to ten students are typically found in each of these rooms, engaged in quiet study.

A GREAT FROG RACE

Characters following the student who invited them to the frog race are led to the fireside lounge (area F5) of Firejolt Café. As in the scene above, the student speaking in this scene should be a student the characters have interacted with. Read or paraphrase the following, altering the text to incorporate the student's name or other details:

> The air buzzes with excitement—and the smell of coffee—as you make your way toward the back of Firejolt Café and duck into the lounge to witness the scene.
>
> Hidden from the view of the barista station, the lounge's central table has been pushed toward the wall and its chairs haphazardly tossed out of the way. In the middle of the room hop four unusual frogs. Each is glowing in vibrant colors—red, blue, violet, and orange—and has been outfitted with a tiny costume. One wears a makeshift cape, another has suspenders, a third wears a stylish bow tie, and the fourth has a top hat perched jauntily on its head.
>
> Someone has used chalk to mark lanes on the floor, and multiple students are trying to corral the frogs into a starting position.

A student notices the characters and shouts, "You're just in time! Want to race these frogs with us?"

The amphibians in the lounge are four **frogs** that students found outside the café and smuggled inside. The frogs' glowing colors appear to be the result of some magic the students haven't been able to source. The costumes—and the frog race that is afoot!—were the students' ideas. For the race, a single student will "coach" each frog toward the finish. The winning coach will receive bragging rights—as well as a purse of donations from the crowd that totals 30 gp.

Participating in the Race

A character can participate in the fun in one of the following ways:

Race a Frog. A character might coach one of the frogs, encouraging it toward the finish line with words, gestures, and other antics. The character can urge their frog to victory with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check. Encourage a player to really sell this scene by naming their frog and coming up with ways to inspire it. If one of the characters succeeds on this Wisdom check, that character's frog wins the race. (If more than one character succeeds, it's a tie, and those characters split the 30 gp prize.) If no characters win the race, roll a d4 to randomly determine which frog wins.

Cheer a Coach. A character might shout encouragement to one of the coaches. If the encouraged coach is another player character, that character gains advantage on their Wisdom (Animal Handling) check to coach the frog. If the coach is an NPC, any characters racing a frog receive disadvantage on their check.

Heckle a Coach. A character might taunt one of the coaches. If the heckled coach is another player character, that character has disadvantage on their Wisdom (Animal Handling) check to coach the frog. If the coach is an NPC, that student's frog automatically loses the race.

Relationship Encounter

At the race, characters might mingle with other students. If there are students the characters wish to earn Relationship Points with, treat this as a Relationship encounter. Have players note the results of this encounter on their copies of the tracking sheet.

They've Gone Berserk!

After the race ends, the four frogs start belching strangely, and their eyes turn red. As the characters and the other students look on, the frogs suddenly grow into four **giant frogs**, shredding their makeshift costumes and furiously lashing out at the crowd!

The other students scatter, and it's up to the characters to subdue the giant frogs. Luckily for any character who has grown attached to a frog, any frog reduced to 0 hit points becomes docile, and its eyes return to normal. Alternatively, a character can use an action to coax a frog into shaking off the malady affecting it with a DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check. On a success, a frog becomes docile again and stops attacking. After 1 minute, each docile frog reverts back to normal size and appearance.

Ending the Threat

If all the characters fall unconscious, café manager Ellina Tanglewood (chaotic good elf **mage**) rushes onto the scene and subdues the frogs. She has two *potions of healing* behind the barista station and can administer them as needed if anyone gets hurt.

Examining the Frogs

Once the frogs are no longer threats, a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals that the frogs belched out a strange, black oily substance just before they grew in size and attacked. It appears to be the same substance found on the trunk during orientation; indeed, Murgaxor coaxed the frogs to ingest some of the corrupted eldritch balm to cause their transformation. Any character who notices the oily substance also can tell that it smells slightly sweet, which likely encouraged the frogs to ingest it.

Magical Physiologies Exam: Slaadi

The characters are enrolled together in the course Magical Physiologies, which is held in a lecture hall in the Biblioplex (one of the areas marked B7 on map 3.1). The course covers the anatomy, abilities, and dispositions of monsters commonly encountered while adventuring. Students read popular accounts related to Aberrations, Monstrosities, and Oozes, as well as studying how best to either avoid a fight with such creatures or battle them and emerge triumphant. The class's professor is Verelda Lang (chaotic neutral **dryad** professor from Witherbloom College), a respected arcano-biologist who teaches Quandrix College courses in addition to her Witherbloom College and general education offerings.

This course's first Exam takes place a short while after the events of the "A Great Frog Race" section and sees students tested on their knowledge of the creatures known as slaadi. The rules for Exams can be found earlier in this chapter.

Studying Phase

The day before the Exam, the characters can study the course material. A character can use any ability check and skill during the Studying phase.

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Once you've asked each player how their character is approaching the Studying phase, resolve that phase by having each character who studies make a DC 12 ability check. Make sure players keep track of their characters' rerolls and apply them during the Testing phase.

Testing Phase

On the day of the Exam, each character makes two ability checks related to parts of the test:

Slaad Facts. Choosing the correct multiple choice answers to questions about red, blue, green, gray, and death slaadi requires a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

Defusing Slaad Confrontations. Writing short essays about commonly accepted ways to keep slaadi calm during unexpected encounters requires a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check.

Have each player note their character's Exam results—how many Student Dice they gained and what skills they used during the test—on their copies of the tracking sheet.

All about Slaadi

To give this Exam more flavor, describe some of the facts the characters are trying to memorize, such as the following:

- Slaadi are Aberrations known for their regenerative abilities and magic resistance.
- All slaadi are dangerous and unpredictable, but red slaadi and blue slaadi are the least powerful and don't cast spells.
- Red slaadi can use a gland under one of their claws to implant an egg into a Humanoid. The egg eventually becomes a tadpole that bursts from the host's body and transforms into a full-grown blue slaad, or a green slaad if the host could cast spells of 3rd level or higher.
- Green, gray, and death slaadi can shape-shift into Small or Medium Humanoids.
- A green slaad usually wields a staff and can hurl both *fireballs* and magical flames at its foes.
- Death slaadi are rumored to have a stench so bad it can be deadly. In reality, they can cast the *cloudkill* spell.
- Inexperienced scholars and adventurers sometimes assume that "slaad" is a misspelling or mispronunciation. Calling these creatures "salads" is frowned upon.

Frogs are common on campus and are often kept as pets.

ADVANCE TO 2ND LEVEL!

Each character advances to 2nd level at the end of the first Exams encounter.

WORK HARD, PLAY HARDER

A short while after their first Magical Physiologies Exam, the characters are milling about the central campus when they see some fellow students heading for Bow's End Tavern, which has just opened for the evening. Another student is part of this scene—ideally a student the characters have interacted with, or you may choose another student from the "Fellow Students" section.

When you're ready to begin this event, read or paraphrase the following, altering the text to incorporate the student's name or other details:

> As students mill around the central campus, whoops of excitement fill the air. It's 6:00 p.m., and Bow's End Tavern is open! On the tavern's patio, three student mages with brightly colored hair begin to sing a jaunty tune and pluck at dulcimers as a crowd heads in that direction.

A student next to the characters shouts to them excitedly.

> "I heard they've finally got some wizard gizzard machines in there!" the student says. "You have to come play with us!"

If a player or character expresses reluctance, have the student talk up the game of Wizard Gizzard and the people already at the tavern to persuade the characters to join them for the game.

BOW'S END TAVERN

Bow's End Tavern is Strixhaven's most popular late-night hangout. It opens at 6:00 p.m. and closes at 11:00 p.m. on class nights and 2:00 a.m. on weekends.

The tavern is a squat but comfortable-looking building, its gleaming wooden exterior carved in overlapping Strixhaven star motifs. The interior is dim and cozy (if loud), featuring rich mahogany floors and well-worn furniture of oak and black leather. Live musical acts often set up on the tavern's patio, including performing groups made up of students, faculty, and staff alike.

BOW'S END TAVERN FEATURES

The tavern has the following features:

Lighting. The magical lights inside the tavern are muted, but creatures can still see normally in all areas.

Ceilings. The tavern's ceilings are 20 feet high.

Doors. After closing, all exterior doors to the patio and tavern are closed, locked, and sealed with an *arcane lock* spell. A successful DC 25 Dexterity check using thieves' tools opens the lock (DC 35 while the *arcane lock* is in effect). Only certain student employees and Tulk "The Bulk" Tusktooth, the tavern's manager (see area E3), know the *arcane lock*'s password.

Magic Steps. The steps marking the boundary between the overflow seating area (area E4) and the main dining room (area E2) are enchanted to move and reshape themselves for full accessibility. See the "Strixhaven Accessibility" sidebar.

Patrons. Students of all years and colleges can be found in Firejolt Café. See chapter 7 for stat blocks for first-year students, and for apprentices and pledgemages from the different colleges.

BOW'S END TAVERN LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to map 3.3. All descriptions assume the characters are in the tavern during its hours of operation. Outside of those hours, the tavern is locked and devoid of other students or staff, except for Tulk Tusktooth and a few staff members who perform cleaning duties during the day.

E1. PATIO SEATING

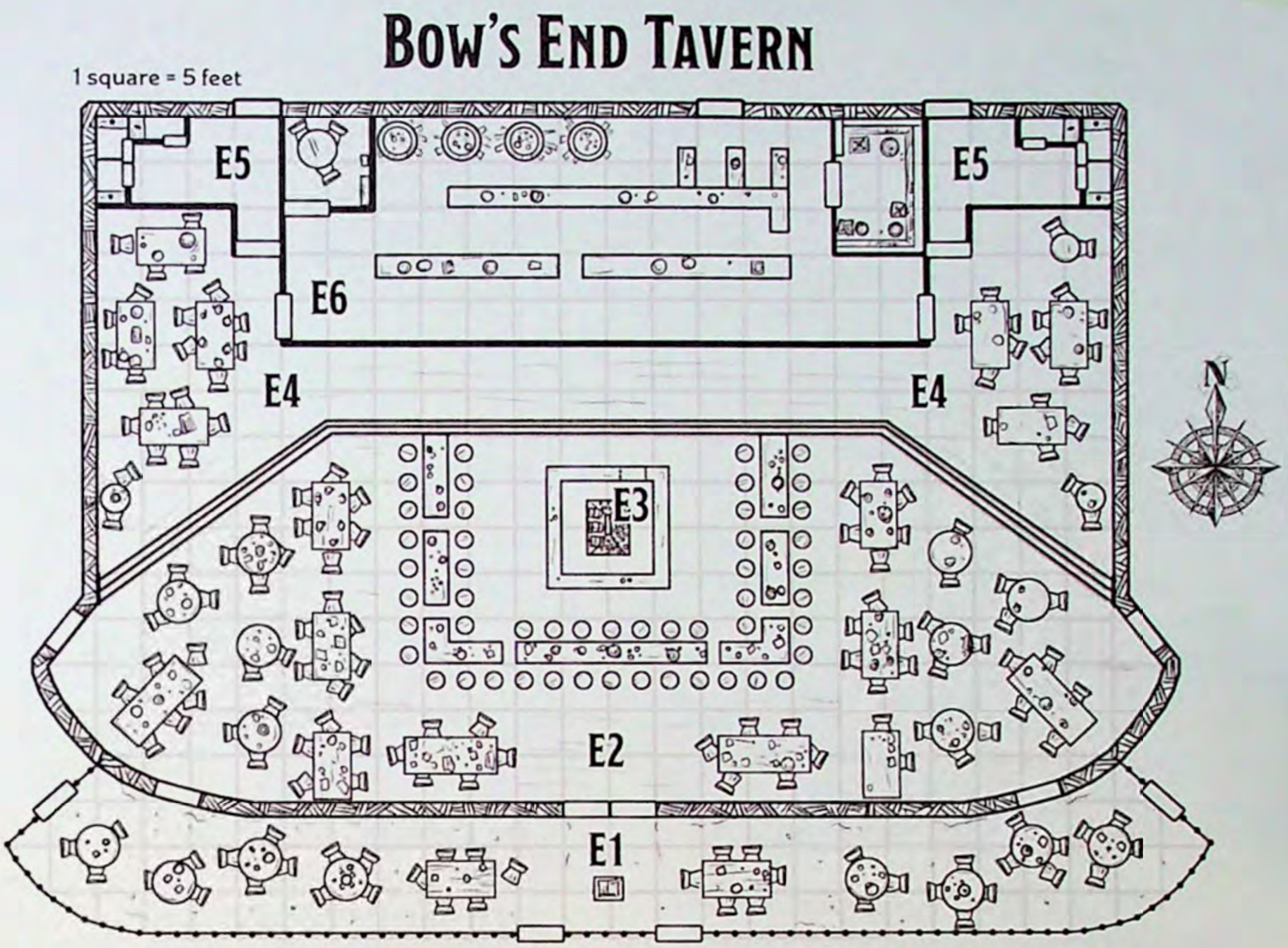
This outdoor seating area is fenced off and is open to tavern customers and noncustomers alike. The patio doors and the front doors leading into the building are closed except when the tavern is open.

Up to thirty-five students can typically be found here during opening hours, eating and chatting. Additionally, at least two older student employees work in this area as servers.

E2. MAIN DINING ROOM

The most crowded area of the tavern is filled with students. At opening hour, the tavern's seating is arranged neatly, as shown on the map. In short order, though, student patrons shift the tables and chairs to accommodate the hangouts, tavern games, and other shenanigans happening in this area.

Anywhere from fifty to seventy students are typically found here, eating, drinking, and socializing. Additionally, at least four older student employees work in this area as servers.



MAP 3.3: BOW'S END TAVERN

E3. SERVERS' STATION AND BAR

The server's station stands at the center of Bow's End Tavern, where up to four older student employees make drinks for the tavern's patrons and pass orders for food to the kitchen.

The food on offer at the tavern includes caster's stew—a hearty bowl of venison, gravy, and root vegetables, served with mashed potatoes and thick-cut toast. Curtie's Special is named for Chef Curtie Axechucker (see area E6) and rotates between dishes she calls "garden surprise," "magister's delight," "macaroni and sausages," and "rat ratatouille." No one knows the ingredients used in these dishes, though servers always ask patrons about possible allergies. The table below lists the tavern's menu and prices.

The bar surrounding the servers' station serves a variety of drinks. This area is often rowdy, so student employee Javenesh Stoutclaw (neutral good owlin **Lorehold apprentice**; see the "Fellow Students" section) remains watchful. From thirty-five to forty-five students are typically found at the bar.

The tavern's manager also keeps an eye on this area. Tulk "The Bulk" Tusktooth (lawful good orc **gladiator**) is a Strixhaven employee with a kind demeanor but no tolerance for misbehavior. Tulk's nickname comes from his imposing physical presence at a burly, muscle-bound height of nearly seven feet—though his warm smile gleams as brightly as his signature golden earring. He is a good friend to Javenesh Stoutclaw, and anyone who puts the owlin in danger must answer to Tulk.

BOW'S END TAVERN MENU

Food or Beverage	Cost
Water	Free
Coffee, cola, or tea	1 cp
Premium fare	4 cp
Caster's stew	2 sp
Curtie's special	2 sp

E4. OVERFLOW SEATING

The quietest part of the tavern, this seating area is the place students go to escape the noise of the main dining room. From ten to twenty students are usually found in this area, relaxing or engaged in conversation. Additionally, at least one older student employee can be found working here as a server.

SEAN MACDONALD

E5. BACK EXIT

These areas afford access to the small stalls that serve as privies for the tavern and each feature a door that leads to the tavern's back lot. These exits are marked "Staff Only" but aren't locked during operating hours, acting as loading areas for receiving supplies throughout the night.

E6. KITCHEN

The tavern's food orders are prepared in this large kitchen, overseen by Curtie Axechucker (chaotic neutral dwarf **commoner**), a Strixhaven employee and beloved personality on campus. Chef Curtie views cooking as an art, and she teaches the four students who work for her to cook using hunches and passion instead of precision or science.

Curtie lives by her teachings (and is said to augment her culinary creations with a little bit of magic), so that no two dishes she or her apprentices cook are ever the same. The chef's signature cries of "Make it spicy!" and "It needs more love!" frequently echo from the kitchen into the overflow seating area. The chef hires all student cooks, so characters who wish to work in the kitchen must approach her directly.

The most prominent features in the kitchen are the cooking cauldrons along the north wall, which are always bubbling with strange and wonderful concoctions. A small break room is set in the northwest corner of the kitchen, while a pantry takes up much of the east wall.

WIZARD GIZZARD!

Characters following the student who invited them to play Wizard Gizzard are led to the main dining room (area E2) of Bow's End Tavern. Read or paraphrase the following:

> Along one side of the tavern's main dining room, the tables and chairs have been shifted to create a large, rectangular open space. On the south side of this space, a single table stands flush against the wall. On it are a few strange-looking boxes with funnels protruding from them at an angle. Twenty feet opposite the table, a small bucket rests on the floor.

The devices on the table are called wizard gizzards. Instructors use them to help student-mages practice their aim with magical rays. When a character strikes the top of a wizard gizzard, it shoots a sphere made of magic out of its attached funnel. The sphere dissipates whenever it touches anything—a ray, a creature, or a hard surface, for example.

These minor magic items have a short life span, and as they age, they begin to emit loud clucking noises when they shoot their spheres. Students joke that the spheres begin to look like gizzards, hence their name. Every term, students collect cast-off wizard gizzards that have grown too unpredictable for classroom use and then use the wizard gizzards in the game of the same name. This night at Bow's End Tavern is the first such event of the term, and enthusiasm is running high.

PLAYING THE GAME

In this scene, the characters have the opportunity to play a game of Wizard Gizzard for a prize. A character can participate in the fun in one of the following ways:

Play the Game. The rules are simple: lob a sphere from the wizard gizzard and have the sphere land inside the bucket on the floor. The game takes 1 minute to play, and the character who lands the most spheres in the bucket during that minute wins the game. To determine how many spheres a character lands in the bucket, have the character make a Dexterity (Arcana) check and divide the total by 3 (round down). If two or more characters land the same number of spheres in the bucket, have those characters repeat the check during a tiebreaker round. Continue to run tiebreaker rounds until one character wins.

Encourage a Participant. If a character shouts encouragement to a participant, that participant has advantage on their Dexterity (Arcana) check.

Heckle a Participant. If a character jeers at a participant, that participant has disadvantage on their Dexterity (Arcana) check.

After setting the scene and explaining the rules, reveal that a *bag of tricks* (gray) will be awarded to the winner of the next game. The bag belongs to Javenesh Stoutclaw (see the "Fellow Students" section), a second-year Lorehold College student and the tavern's assistant manager. Javenesh doesn't need the bag and is entertained by watching first-year students compete to win. He also secretly hopes that sponsoring the game might win him more friends on campus.

RELATIONSHIP ENCOUNTER

Before and after the game, characters might mingle with other students. If there are students the characters wish to earn Relationship Points with, treat this as a Relationship encounter, as described in those rules. For example, a character who loses the game but is gracious toward the winner might earn the winner's respect and seed a friendship.

Don't forget to have players note the results of this encounter on the tracking sheet.

Bow's End Tavern caters to a wide range of tastes and dietary needs.

STEVE PRESCOTT

Chaos in the Kitchen

Even as the game of Wizard Gizzard ends and a winner is declared, Bow's End Tavern erupts into pandemonium. Read or paraphrase the following:

> Panicked shouting erupts from the tavern's kitchen. Chef Curtie, her braided hair flapping wildly, emerges at a run, shouting and waving her arms.
>
> "The steam! It's too spicy!" she cries. "It's trying to kill us! Someone, please help!"
>
> The tavern is so busy that most of its patrons don't immediately notice Curtie's panic. Tulk Tusktooth does, but he's momentarily overwhelmed by those students in the overflow seating who have noticed—and who are trying to get away from the kitchen as fast as they can. You have a clear path to the kitchen door—and Curtie needs help!

When the characters enter area E6, they find the kitchen's student cooks unconscious on the floor, while four **steam mephits** fly around the cauldrons. As in the previous scenes, one of the cooks can be another student the characters have interacted with, filling in for an absent cook for the evening.

The hostile mephits attack as soon as the characters appear, but they aren't the only threat in the kitchen. Horrid masses of summoned skittering bugs suddenly pour out of bags and boxes of ingredients in the food prep areas, just as other students storm into the kitchen behind the characters. While the characters take on the more dangerous mephits, describe their friends and fellow students working in the background alongside them to help clear the bugs out of the kitchen. As soon as the mephits are dispatched, the magic flaring up in the kitchen fades.

Ending the Threat

If all the characters fall unconscious during the fight, Tulk shows up at the start of the next round and dispatches the mephits. Tulk has two *potions of healing* stored behind the servers' station, and he offers them to any injured characters. If the discussion turns to what happened, Tulk explains that sometimes Curtie's culinary experiments go awry, so such chaos in the kitchen isn't unheard of. For her part, Curtie insists that the mephits were not part of any new recipe test, and that they came out of nowhere.

Examining the Cauldrons

Once the mephits are dispatched, a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals the same oily black substance on the cauldrons that the characters might have seen belched out by the frogs before the Firejolt Café race and found on the trunk during orientation. If the characters ask either Tulk Tusktooth or Curtie Axechucker about the substance, both suspect that one of the many magic unguents used on campus might have gotten corrupted. They have no way of knowing that Murgaxor's corrupted eldritch balm is the unguent in question and no idea what else might be affected.

MAGICAL PHYSIOLOGIES EXAM: OWLBEARS

The characters' second Exam in Magical Physiologies takes place a short while after the Wizard Gizzard game and sees students tested on their knowledge of owlbears.

STUDYING PHASE

The day before the Exam, a character can study the course material. A character can use any ability check and skill during this Studying phase.

Once you've asked each player how their character is approaching the Studying phase, resolve that phase by having each character who studies make a DC 12 ability check. Make sure players keep track of their characters' rerolls from this phase and apply them during the Testing phase.

TESTING PHASE

On the day of the Exam, each character makes two ability checks related to parts of the test:

Owlbear Disposition and Habits. Choosing the correct multiple choice answers regarding owlbears' hunting, eating, mating, fighting, and living habits requires a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check.

Owlbear Companions. Writing short essays on common methods for taming, training, and handling owlbears and on keeping owlbears as companions requires a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check.

Have each player note their character's Exam results—how many Student Dice they gained and what skills they used during the test—on their copies of the tracking sheet.

ALL ABOUT OWLBEARS

To give this Exam more flavor, describe some of the facts the characters are trying to memorize, such as the following:

- Owlbears are aggressive and often ill-tempered carnivores. They are known to attack without provocation.
- Owlbears most often live in caves or ruins. The bones of their prey serve as their beds and playgrounds.
- Owlbears attack with their razor-sharp beaks and claws.
- Many scholars believe a kooky wizard created the first owlbear in a breeding experiment gone awry. However, some elves claim owlbears have always existed in the Feywild.
- Although they aren't naturally drawn to cupcakes and muffins, these foods are known to quell an owlbear's foul temper. Arcano-biologists believe they quell the creatures' rumbling acid reflux.
- Owlbears respond best to training that mimics exactly what their trainer wishes them to do. Crawling on one's hands and knees is often the best way to teach an owlbear to be a mount, for example.
- An owlbear's screech sounds vaguely similar to the cry of an enormous owl with terrible indigestion. Owls don't suffer from indigestion, though, making this a sure sign that an owlbear is nearby.

CLASSROOM GOSSIP

After the exam, the characters overhear their peers talking excitedly about certain magical and monstrous creatures' likenesses being used in the upcoming Rose Stage Festival, an improvisational outdoor play (see "All the World's a Stage" later in this chapter).

CHATTER DETAILS

The characters might hear any of the following remarks. The first two rumors are more or less true, while the second two aren't:

Owlbear Prop. "The Playactors Drama Guild has combined the hide of a bear and an owl head taxidermy to create a weird owlbear prop."

Basilisk Prop. "A prop at this year's festival uses flashes of light to simulate a gaze attack, just like a basilisk."

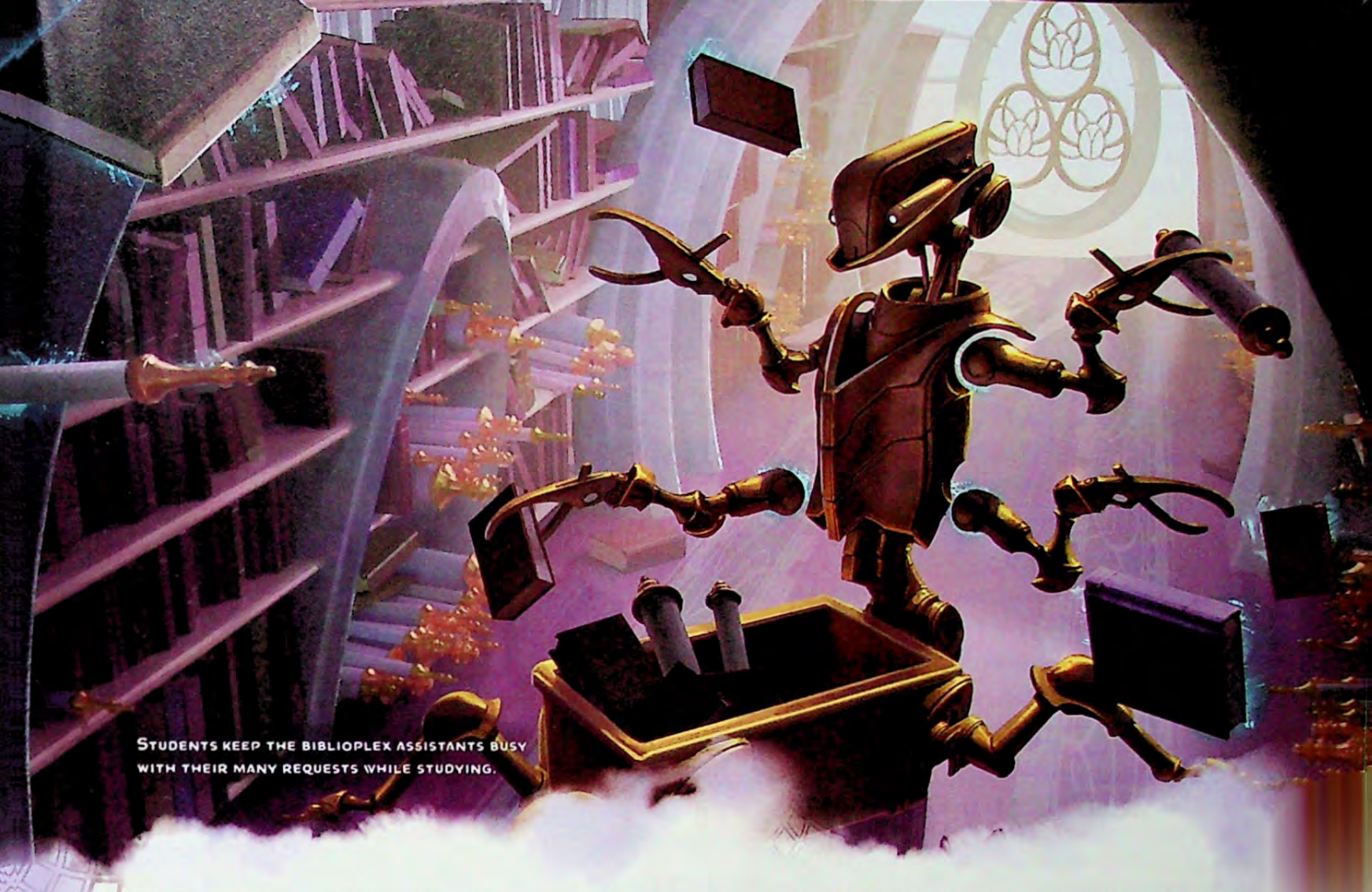
Chimera Prop. "The drama guild plans to use dragon, goat, and lion puppets to simulate a chimera. Someone has figured out how to magically replicate those creatures' sounds.

Black Dragon Prop. "Someone wants to summon and control a real young black dragon on stage. No way will that work!"

CAMPUS DAREDEVILS

A short while after their second Magical Physiologies Exam, a student the characters have interacted with before (or a random student from the "Fellow Students" section earlier in the chapter) rushes up to one of the characters, stuffs a handwritten note into their grasp, winks, and dashes away. The note is crumpled and slightly damp. It reads:

> "Big heroes on campus! You're the talk of the school, what with your monster-dispatching ways. But can you recover the legendary Sassy Sally Jane? Many have tried. All have failed. Meet us outside Captain Dapplewing's Manor at midnight tonight and see if you've got what it takes!"



STUDENTS KEEP THE BIBLIOPLEX ASSISTANTS BUSY WITH THEIR MANY REQUESTS WHILE STUDYING.

The note isn't signed, but will be later revealed as coming from a student the characters know.

The characters have several hours before their peers are expecting them at midnight, so allow them to prepare for this outing any way they wish. Provide them with the following information, and then when they're ready, go to the "Recover Sassy Sally Jane" section below.

SASSY SALLY JANE

The talk of the campus for decades, Sassy Sally Jane is a pink-haired doll in a patchwork tartan dress. Inside the doll is a voice box that some clever students rigged to repeat rude phrases whenever the doll's hand is squeezed. Jokesters used it to irritate faculty and staff members extensively before it was confiscated. The doll has sat in the attic of Captain Dapplewing's Manor ever since, alongside other broken, malfunctioning, or forbidden items.

AN EXCLUSIVE ENCLAVE

Captain Dapplewing's manor house is used as a learning annex by esteemed dual-college faculty members and their favored students.

A two-story home, the house is located on the central campus and serves as both faculty offices and the setting for lavish dinner parties and intellectual gatherings. A character knows all the information in the "Captain Dapplewing's Manor" section later in this chapter with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (History) check.

IZZY

RECOVER SASSY SALLY JANE

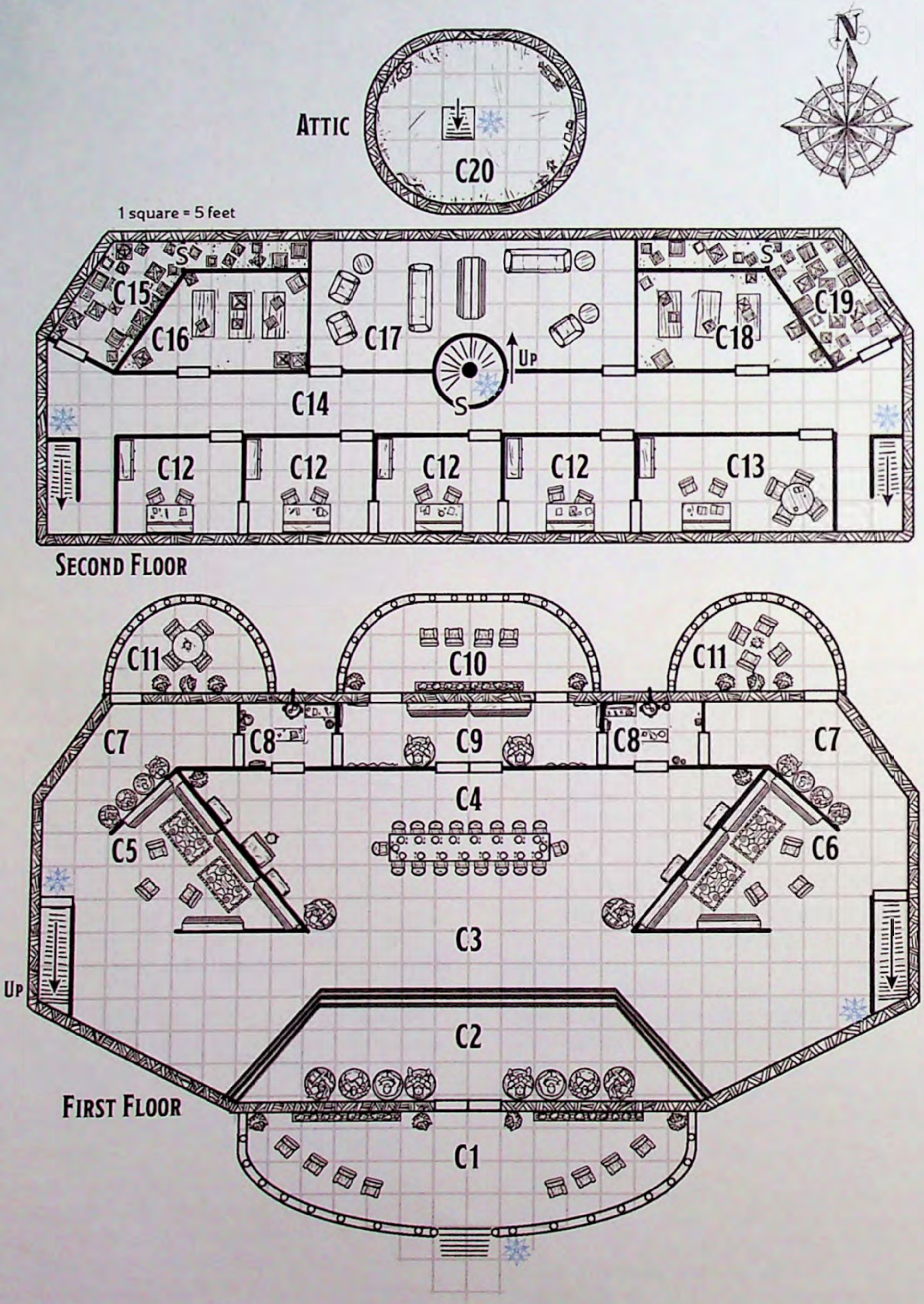
Once the characters are prepared, they can make their way to Captain Dapplewing's Manor. It's easy to find on the central campus, since a well-lit path leads right up to the house, and a few students are milling around outside. Once they notice the characters heading their way, these students get visibly excited.

Another student is part of this scene—ideally a student the characters have interacted with, or you may choose another student from the "Fellow Students" section.

When you're ready to begin this event, read or paraphrase the following:

> As the bright light of the central campus fades into the verdant grounds of Captain Dapplewing's Manor, you see a small group of your peers congregated underneath a massive oak tree in the manor's front yard.

CAPTAIN DAPPLEWING'S MANOR


ATTIC
C20
1 square = 5 feet
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SECOND FLOOR
C11
C10
C11
C7
C8
C9
C8
C7
C4
C5
C6
C3
UP
UP
C2
FIRST FLOOR
C1

MAP 3.4: CAPTAIN DAPPLEWING'S MANOR

SEAN MACDONALD

One student turns to another and says in a stage whisper, "I told you they'd arrive! Now pay up, you goof!" Turning to the characters, the student points to the manor house and says:

> "This is it. Sassy Sally Jane is up there in the attic. For years, people have tried to liberate her. For years, they've failed. But we think this year is different. This year, you're on campus."
>
> "You're looking for a pink-haired doll wearing a patchwork tartan dress. Now, go in there and become campus legends. If you can bring her back, we'll all pay for your lunches for a week. No, for a month!"

Extra Incentive

If the characters are hesitant to take this dare, a student with whom a character has at least 1 Relationship Point approaches them. The student misses their younger brother terribly and has decided that Sassy Sally Jane would make an excellent gift. The student offers the characters a *driftglobe* in exchange for retrieving Sassy Sally Jane and giving them the doll.

Captain Dapplewing's Manor

Tucked at the end of a leafy path on the central campus, Captain Dapplewing's Manor is a quiet relaxation spot for elite faculty as well as a place of academic meditation and counseling for their students. The manor dates to the earliest days of Strixhaven, when the owlin mage and military veteran Captain Raymous Dapplewing held faculty appointments in both Lorehold and Silverquill Colleges. Wanting a quiet place to retire in the evenings—and to host lavish dinner-parties-turned-colloquiums—the professor used his significant military pension to build this manor house on campus.

Upon his death, Captain Dapplewing bequeathed the manor to the university, which honored his legacy by giving the house his name and keeping most of its original furnishings in pristine condition. The house's upper-floor libraries were converted into offices for esteemed dual-college faculty members, and those faculty members meet here with students on academic matters during the day. In the evenings, the manor is the site of dinner parties and elegant cocktail hours for those faculty members, their most promising students, and visiting alumni.

The Jig Is Up!

If the characters alert security to their unauthorized presence at the manor, they are caught when the professors arrive. The professors force the characters to return to their dormitories, but the characters are free to undertake this mission another night. If they're caught more than once, the characters must attend special behavioral classes that prevent them from participating in any Extracurriculars or Jobs for the rest of the academic year. The characters immediately lose any benefits from these activities.

Since no one permanently lives in Captain Dapplewing's Manor, the building is closed and locked from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Because it holds many valuable antiques and volumes of sensitive research, security measures are in place in the manor, as described below.

Entering the Manor

Once the characters are ready to go, allow them to approach the house in any way they see fit. The easiest way to access the manor is through its locked front doors (area C1), although characters could easily try to access the manor via one of the decks at the back (areas C10 and C11).

Captain Dapplewing's Manor Features

The manor has the following features:

Ceilings. The ceilings throughout the manor are 20 feet high.

Doors. The manor's outside doors (in areas C1, C10, and C11) are locked. A character can pick a lock with a successful DC 15 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Anyone can easily break the glass doors, but doing so summons security (see below). The inside doors are unlocked unless otherwise noted.

Lighting. By night, the interior of the manor is in darkness.

Magic Stairs. Stairs and steps in the manor are enchanted to move and reshape themselves for full accessibility.

Transport Circles. A runic circle is painted on the floor near each staircase in the manor, as well as at the top and bottom of the steps leading inside the building in area C1. These circles are permanent, customized teleportation circles. Anyone can move onto a circle and mentally focus on the floor to which they wish to travel. (The circle leading to the attic is in the manor's hidden staircase, which must be found first.) When a character is teleported from a circle near a staircase, they arrive on the destination floor on the runic circle nearest the corresponding staircase. The circle outside the main entrance automatically transports characters directly in front of the manor's front doors.

Security. If an outside door is smashed or the characters engage in noticeable vandalism, a **Silverquill professor of radiance** and a **Quandrix professor of substance** (see chapter 7 for both) arrive at the manor in 1d4 rounds. Both are serving as campus security for the night and deal with the characters as noted in the sidebar "The Jig Is Up!"

Just a Little Vandalism?

If the characters are on their best behavior, avoiding combat and trying not to break anything, they should be able to have fun in this event without worrying about lasting damage to the manor. All the Constructs here (including the Earl and the dragon heads plaque) have a self-restoring quality that allows them to repair damage taken during a skirmish. But if characters egregiously smash open doors or engage in property damage, impose repercussions even if their mission to retrieve Sassy Sally Jane is successful.

Manor Locations

The following locations are keyed to map 3.4. The descriptions assume the characters explore the manor after class hours. During the day, the manor is open, with students and faculty throughout.

C1. Veranda

> A mahogany roof covers this porch, which is bounded by a low rail and outfitted with fine wicker furniture. Above the double door hangs a sign done in fine calligraphy: "Captain Dapplewing's Manor."

A search of the veranda and a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check turns up a key to the front door stashed inside the potted plant. A faculty member who often loses their keys placed this spare here.

C2. Foyer

> Coat racks carved to resemble statues of individuals line the entryway into the manor beyond. The coat racks flanking the doors depict two dwarves wearing high-collared jackets. The other coat racks on the left depict a one-tusked loxodon, a monocle-wearing orc, and a gnome with a skunk for a hairpiece. The statues on the right depict a drow wearing a scarf, a burly human in a tuxedo, and a high elf in a cowl.

With successful DC 15 Intelligence (History) check, a character recalls that the individuals depicted were Captain Dapplewing's favorite military compatriots, all great friends of Strixhaven.

A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check notices that the boxy dwarf "coat racks" are moving slightly. Both are designed to serve as attendants and use the **duodrone** stat block. Without professors to control them, the coat racks attack the characters either when they first notice the coat racks moving or as they move into area C3.

C3. Grand Hall

> A set of magically shifting steps connects the foyer to this spacious, open area. Beautiful, thick carpet adorns the floor, topped by a crimson runner that leads into the dining hall beyond. From the corner of your eye, you see a formally attired figure.

Normally a place where people socialize while they wait for dinner, this space is occupied at night by a clockwork butler nicknamed the Earl, which paces back and forth. The Earl wears a silver waistcoat, a black jacket with tails, and a cravat, and it uses the **Strixhaven campus guide** stat block (see chapter 7). Without anyone to correct it, the butler believes the characters are burglars. It shouts a warning in Common—"The Earl commands you to leave!"—before attacking.

C4. Dining Hall

> The centerpiece of this hall is a beautifully decorated dining table, its china and silver arranged just so. Along the wall to the west is an upright piano flanked by cushioned benches. To the east stands a fireplace, its embers still glowing.

The Earl in area C3 sets the table every night before the manor is closed and locked. A character who searches under the table and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a small velvet coin purse someone dropped. Inside is 15 gp.

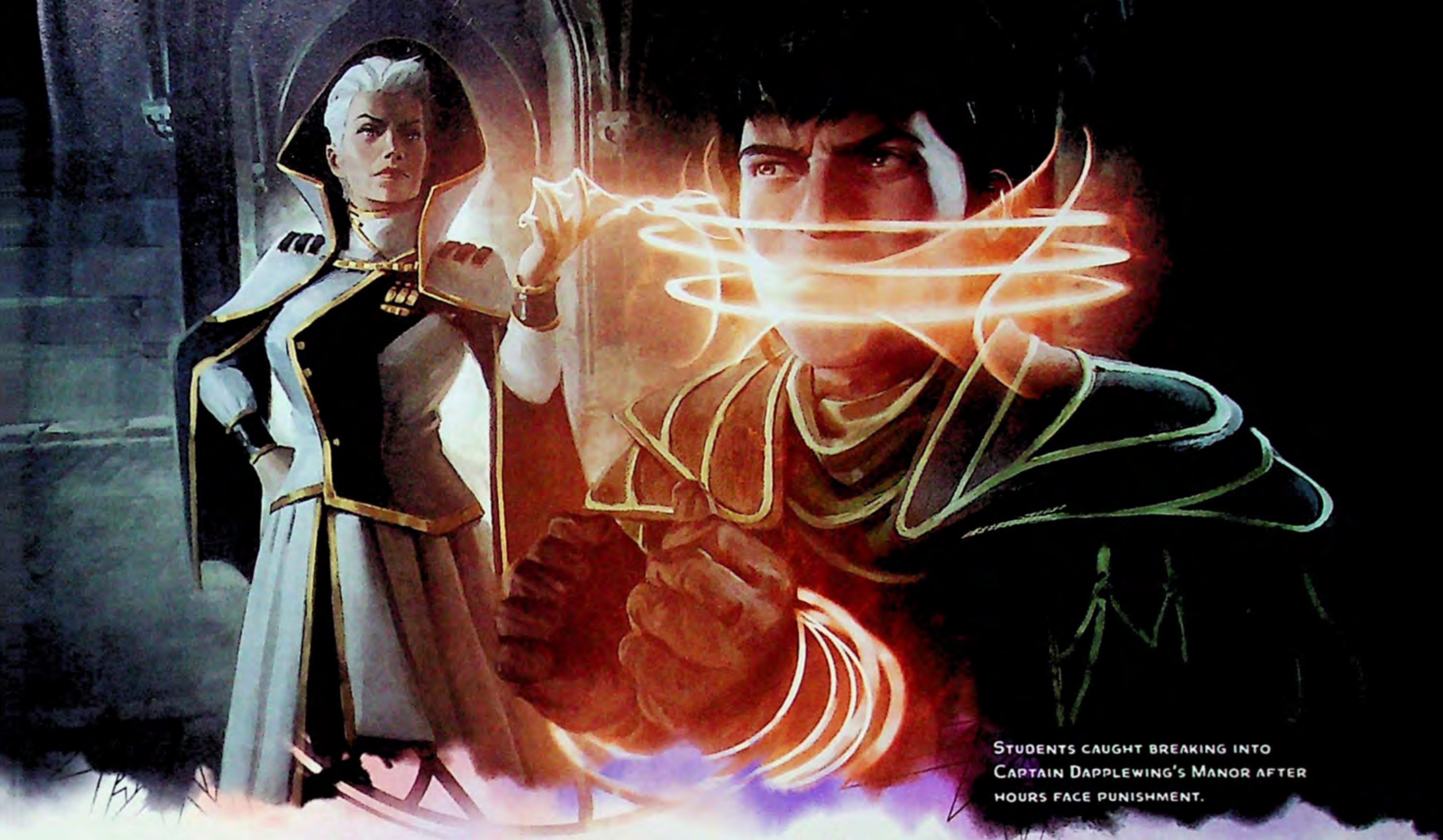
The piano is functional and magical. If a character tries to play it, the piano plays an entire jaunty, military-style march. This alerts the Earl in area C3 to the presence of intruders, if the characters have not already encountered the clockwork butler.

Treasure. The fireplace has a number of implements for tending the fire set to one side of it. A character who examines these implements and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers a poker with a silvered end that can be easily removed and used as a silvered dagger.

C5. Portrait Salon

> This salon features a comfortable sitting area and rows of portraits hung on the walls.

A character who examines the paintings recognizes that they feature several historical Strixhaven professors, as well as the friends of the university depicted in the coat racks in area C2.



STUDENTS CAUGHT BREAKING INTO CAPTAIN DAPPLEWING'S MANOR AFTER HOURS FACE PUNISHMENT.

C6. DRAWING ROOM

> This cozy drawing room holds bookcases as well as a number of easels folded and tucked in beside them. In the northeast corner, an easel holds a watercolor painting of a stylized, chicken-like reptilian creature lounging in a baroque style.

The painting was created using magic by a talented student as a parlor trick. If a character touches the painting, the creature in the painting disappears and a **cockatrice** appears beside the character. The confused creature attacks, then winks out of existence when defeated.

C7. HALL OF BEAUTY

> This hall is lined with four exquisitely carved marble busts set on gilded pedestals. The abstract busts all represent beautiful androgynous figures bedecked with jewelry carved into its stone—and with a single, twelve-foot-long fur stole wrapped around the shoulders of all four statues.

A student's magic trick, the stoles in both these areas each animate into a **fire snake** if any character moves within 5 feet of the busts. The fire snakes wink out of existence when defeated.

CRISTI BALANESCU

C8. KITCHEN

> Pots, pans, cooking utensils, fire pits, and dry goods are tucked into every visible corner of this small kitchen. A pair of crossed sabers hangs above the shelves to the north.

If anyone tries to steal anything from one of the kitchens, the two sabers in that area animate into two **flying swords** and attack the thieves. If the characters flee that area, the sabers return to their place on the wall.

In addition to the visible cooking supplies, the kitchens include cabinets that hold extra silver and china for the dining table in area C4. Any of the knives found here can serve as daggers, though they are branded on one side with the image of an eye patch-wearing owlin and the words "Captain Dapplewing's Kitchen."

C9. CURIO ROOM

> Cabinets full of curiosities line the northern wall of this room. The strange items on display here include a stuffed pheasant, a sextant dressed as a doll, and a plaque with insects mounted on it. The insects are wearing tiny top hats.

Flanking the double door leading to area C4 are two shining sets of antique plate armor. If a character touches either set of armor, a random set comes to life as **animated armor** and attacks. Only one of the suits attacks at a time, and it doesn't leave the area if the characters flee. However, if the characters leave the area and come back, both suits attack upon their return.

C10. Grand Deck

This spacious deck has a low railing that the characters can easily climb over to access the locked glass door leading into the manor.

The pots of greenery on either side of this deck are filled with magic vegetation that was recently transplanted and is only loosely rooted. The round after the characters first enter this area, three of these plants attack—two from the pot on the west side of the deck and one from the pot to the east. Each plant uses the **violet fungus** stat block.

C11. Side Deck

These smaller side decks each have a low railing that the characters can easily climb over to access the locked glass door leading into manor.

Bushy magic cacti grow in pots along the manor walls. The cacti have been overwatered recently, so they're restless and attack anyone who moves into this area. Two cacti on each deck attack, using the **needle blight** stat block.

C12. Faculty Office

> This office is comfortably furnished with a wide oak desk, a high-backed leather armchair, a towering bookcase, and homey wall hangings.

Characters who search any of these offices find scattered research papers, course notes, and other paperwork and academic bric-a-brac.

Treasure. Each office also has a 25 percent chance of having loose change worth 5 gp in a desk drawer.

C13. Captain Dapplewing's Study

> This large office serves as both parlor and study. Antique furnishings line the walls, along with the sculpted heads of several magic creatures. A heavy table and a desk are covered in scattered documents.

Once Captain Dapplewing's study, this large office is often used for sensitive discussions among faculty members. The decor has stayed the same since Captain Dapplewing's time.

On the northern wall, a plaque holds the heads of a black and a red dragon, each clearly constructed from metallic crafting supplies. This device is a strange magic curiosity that was once a favorite of the captain's and that faculty members using the office know to avoid. The plaque animates both heads to attack any character who moves within 5 feet of it.

While animated, each dragon head has blindsight out to a range of 30 feet and is blind beyond that distance. On initiative count 20, the black dragon head exhales a glob of acid while the red dragon exhales a fiery missile, each targeting one creature the head can see (+6 to hit). A creature hit by either attack takes 6 (1d8 + 2) damage of the appropriate type (acid or fire).

Each head has a speed of 0, AC 16, 25 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Their ability scores are as follows: Strength 6, Dexterity 14, Constitution 10, Intelligence 3, Wisdom 3, and Charisma 1.

C14. Central Passageway

This wide hallway offers access to the rooms on the second level of the manor. A large pillar that juts into the passageway appears to be a structural column, but actually hides a staircase leading to area C20. Because the students and faculty here don't bother to fully close it, the secret door can be found with any search of the area.

C15. Faculty Storage

Boxes and filing cabinets have been crammed into this area, filled with old written records and outdated research. If the characters spend a few minutes searching here, they can easily find a box labeled "Manor Archive." This details all the historical information found at the start of the "Captain Dapplewing's Manor" section.

Treasure. The paneling in the northeast corner conceals a secret door that isn't fully shut, and so it can be found by any character who searches the area. Beyond the door is a secondary storage area holding boxes with personal items that faculty members have stashed away from prying eyes. Any character who searches the secondary storage area spots a *ring of mind shielding* seemingly lost by someone while working in the room. The inscription "V. Lang" inside the band hints that the ring belongs to Verelda Lang, the characters' Magical Physiologies professor. If they bring the lost ring to her, she is effusive in her thanks—and then offers it to the characters as a gift, trying to conceal her pride at their accomplishments.

C16. Reflection Room

> Daybeds piled high with pillows stand in the corners of this spacious, comfortable-looking room.

This is the manor's quiet room, where faculty go to read or write without being disturbed.

Treasure. If the characters search this area, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals several small hidden drawers in the frame of one of the day beds. Inside one of the drawers is a *gem of brightness* with 10 charges remaining.

C17. Grand Lounge

> This spacious lounge is decorated to an arcano-biologist's tastes. Paintings of strange magic creatures line the walls, as do mounted collections of insects and reptiles. Three pteranodons form the room's centerpiece—all of them magically immobile in midair, positioned as if engaging in a strange dance.

Located just in front of the large sofa along the north wall, the three creatures are subjects of study by the manor's faculty. Each uses the **pteranodon** stat block but has the magic ability to freeze in place, even in midair. With no faculty around to control them, the dormant creatures awake and attack the characters as soon as they enter the room.

C18. Tea Room

> Several delicate tea sets are arranged on the floor in this room, alongside beautifully woven kneeling rugs and cabinets against the walls.

Treasure. One cabinet along the east wall is filled with tea-making supplies, plus a bottle with a sweet-smelling liquid inside. The bottle holds a *potion of mind reading*.

C19. Student Storage

This storeroom is filled with loose parchment, books, and misfiled paperwork. In the center of the room, two crates containing ink jars have been knocked over, a mishap that faculty members intend to program the Earl in area C3 to clean up the next day. The ink has drawn power from a number of old magic-infused writings in the area, and now it's become two hostile creatures. These now behave as two **gray oozes**. The magic ink stealthily follows any characters who enter this area, and attacks aggressively at first opportunity.

Treasure. The paneling in the northwest corner conceals a secret door, which can be found with a search of the area and a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check. Beyond the door is a secondary storage area that is much better organized, though a thick layer of dust on the boxes and crates here indicates that no one has accessed it in a while. Characters who search this area find two *potions of mind reading* tucked into a pouch in one of the boxes.

C20. Attic

> This cramped attic holds oddities considered too strange to display on the manor's main floor. An adult-sized riding toy resembling a roc on a spring, a fine dress with wings made of bones, and a display shelf holding dozens of dolls are among the curiosities here.

Dangerous in a way the faculty members don't understand yet, the dress is actually a hostile Construct. It uses the **quadrone** stat block and can shoot the bones from its wings using the quadrone's shortbow attack. When the characters enter this area, it attacks.

Sassy Sally Jane. Among the dolls on the display shelf is the target of the characters' quest—the pink-haired doll known as Sassy Sally Jane. The doll is programmed with spoken phrases and trigger conditions, which the characters might activate. See the following section for details.

Treasure. Sitting underneath Sassy Sally Jane is a doll wearing a suit and adorned with a large white mustache. A purse held in the doll's hands contains 25 gp.

Sassy Sally Jane's Phrases

The rude phrases that are part of Sassy Sally Jane's reputation are the subject of much speculation on campus, but no current students know what they are. Once the characters recover the doll, they will likely press her hand to trigger these phrases.

The Phrases table offers some suggestions, but feel free to come up with additional phrases that you and your players will find fun and amusing.

Phrases

d6	Phrase
1	"Really? In those robes?"
2	"G-R-O-S-S. Gross."
3	"I heard you snack on owlbear pellets."
4	"If you say so."
5	"How about 'Hells, no!'"
6	"No one believes that's chocolate."

Post Quest

If the characters retrieve Sassy Sally Jane, the students waiting outside Captain Dapplewing's Manor cheer quietly. All the students can easily steal back to their dormitories without getting caught. The characters' peers are true to their word and pay for the characters' lunches for a month. Further, the characters can keep Sassy Sally Jane. (However, obvious use of the doll around faculty members results in Sassy Sally Jane being confiscated again!)

If all the characters are reduced to 0 hit points inside the manor, they spend the night unconscious and are found by members of the faculty in the morning. The characters are taken to the infirmary in their respective dorms, then formally chastised and made to attend special behavioral courses that prevent them from participating in any Extracurriculars or Jobs for the rest of this academic year. All the characters immediately lose any benefits from these activities.

A Sibling's Gift. If a student asked the characters for Sassy Sally Jane for their younger brother and the characters give them the doll, the student gives them the promised *driftglobe*. If no student approached the characters with this request, a student with whom a character has at least 1 positive Relationship Point asks the characters for the doll to give it as a gift to her younger brother shortly after his quest ends.

Advance to 3rd Level!

Each character advances to 3rd level once they've finished exploring Captain Dapplewing's Manor and resolved the "Campus Daredevils" section.

Magical Physiologies Exam: Otyughs

The characters' third and final Exam in Magical Physiologies takes place a short while after their foray into Captain Dapplewing's Manor, and tests the characters' knowledge of otyughs.

Studying Phase

The day before the Exam, the characters can study the course material. A character can use any ability check and skill during the Studying phase.

Once you've asked each player how their character is approaching the Studying phase, resolve that phase by having each character who studies make a DC 13 ability check. Make sure players keep track of their characters' rerolls from this phase and apply them during the Testing phase.

All about Otyughs

To give this Exam more flavor, describe some of the facts the characters are trying to memorize, such as the following:

- If a place is disgusting, there's a good chance an otyugh is nearby.
- Bones and carrion mixed with trash are often a strong sign that an otyugh is present, as it waits for carrion to ferment before eating it.
- Shiny treasures glinting from piles of refuse might indicate an otyugh's presence, as these Aberrations hoard treasures from their victims.
- No matter how disgusting it might be, trash doesn't belch. If you ever hear a pile of trash belch, there's an otyugh in there.
- Some spellcasters use otyughs as guardians, both to protect their underground lairs and to dispose of their enemies.
- Characters with evil designs who wish to congregate far from prying eyes often operate underground, knowing that the authorities avoid stench- and trash-filled undercrofts and sewers. In such foul locations, otyughs make excellent sidekicks.

Testing Phase

On the day of the Exam, each character makes two ability checks:

Otyugh Lair Evidence. Choosing the correct multiple choice answers about physical signs pointing to the presence of an otyugh, including large piles of particularly noxious trash, deep vats of liquid dung, chunks of carrion scattered among filth, and incongruous noises coming from the trash, requires a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

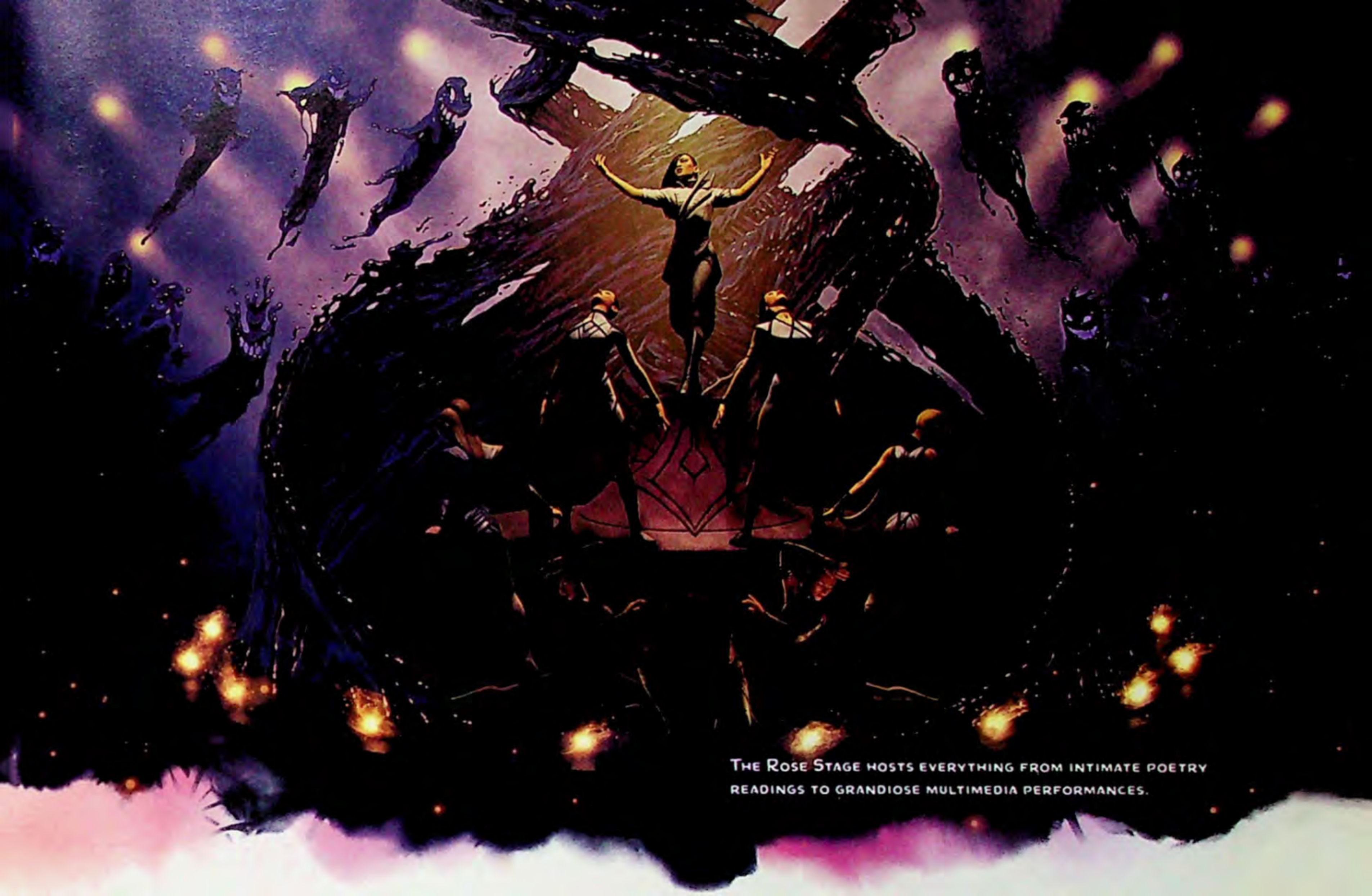
Otyughs as Guardians. Writing short essays about the details of which intelligent creatures might use otyughs as guardians requires a successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

Have each player note their character's Exam results—how many Student Dice they gained and what skills they used during the test—on their copies of the tracking sheet.

All the World's a Stage

A short while after their third Exam, the characters become aware of the buzz on campus regarding the Rose Stage Festival. Held every year, the Rose Stage Festival blends performing arts and improvisation to produce a new play. The entire student body is invited to participate or spectate as they wish. (For more about the festival, see the "Rose Stage Festival" section below.)

Another student is part of this scene—ideally a student the characters have interacted with, or you may choose another student from the "Fellow Students" section.



The Rose Stage hosts everything from intimate poetry readings to grandiose multimedia performances.

STEVE ARGYLE

When you're ready to begin this event, read or paraphrase the following:

> Yodeling, mocking chants, dramatic intonations, baritone singing, and other enthusiastic sounds reach your ears as a rowdy, laughing group of students comes into view.

A student sees the characters and shouts a greeting. Beckoning the characters closer, the student says:

> "We're on our way to the Rose Stage over on Silverquill's campus. The Rose Stage Festival is finally here! Everyone's already practicing their performances!"
>
> "The festival is all about improv. The drama guild gives out prompts, and anyone who wants can take the stage and deliver their lines however they please. It's hilarious—you've got to come check it out!"

The Rose Stage

A popular outdoor performing space, the Rose Stage holds benches for spectators, an orchestra pit, and a large main stage decorated with a huge rose. An enclosed annex building behind the main stage serves as a preparation area for performers, as well as a storage area for stage equipment and props.

The Rose Stage is available to any group or course on campus. The Playactors Drama Guild often uses the stage to rehearse and perform, and other amateur groups and courses with a performance component regularly do so as well. The Playactors Drama Guild is organizing the festival.

Students of all years and colleges can be found in and around the Rose Stage, as can professors from all parts of Strixhaven. See chapter 7 for stat blocks for first-year students, and for apprentices, pledgemages, and professors from the different colleges.

Setting up Sedgemoor

The characters will have heard about Sedgemoor during their first year at Strixhaven, but they have likely had no reason to explore the bayou surrounding the Witherbloom College campus. That changes when Verelda Lang (the characters' Magical Physiologies professor) assigns them to collect material components in Sedgemoor for her spells. Set up this assignment in the course of preparing for this event, so that the characters have the task already in mind when they learn of the connections between Sedgemoor and the strange magic plaguing the campus.

ROSE STAGE LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to map 3.5. All descriptions assume the characters are present in daylight hours during the Rose Stage Festival. At night, the area is devoid of students and the doors to the annex building are locked.

R1. GENERAL SEATING

This area contains rows of benches, magically treated to resist the elements, and with low-sloping ramps set between them. During the festival, some fifty students can be found in this area, sitting, chatting, and watching the performances.

R2. ORCHESTRA PIT

This sunken area is reserved for the student or professional musicians who accompany musical productions or provide ambient music for other stage shows. During the festival, members of the Strixhaven Show Band Association hand out kazoos from this spot to any spectators who wish to accompany the improvised performances.

R3. MAIN STAGE

This impressively large oval stage has ample room for performers, props, and other set pieces. A wide set of magic steps rises 5 feet to the stage; sections of it are enchanted to move and reshape themselves for full accessibility. Pillars to the east and west of the stage are used by production groups to rig backdrops and other set pieces.

All improvisational acting during the festival must take place on the stage. Members of the Playactors Drama Guild are set up to the south of the stage, handing out random character prompts. (See the "Rose Stage Festival" section for more information.)

R4. BACKSTAGE DOORS

When regular plays are being performed at the Rose Stage, these doors open up to an area where student performers wait for their cues before discreetly ascending to the main stage. During the festival, this area is empty.

Although the doors are locked at night, any character who is a member of the Playactors Drama Guild has a key that opens the doors, or a character can pick the lock with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

R5. ROSE ROOM

Normally used for performers to dress, apply makeup, and make other preparations before a show, this area is empty during the festival.

R6. STORAGE HALL

These short hallways connect the main areas of the annex building to its two storage rooms.

R7. STAGE STORAGE AREA

These areas hold props, equipment, and supplies used for the Rose Stage's productions. Most of what's here is marked "Property of the Playactors Drama Guild," though a few items and boxes are unmarked.

Treasure. A thorough search and a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals several valuable items in each storage area. An unmarked box in the west storage area holds three *potions of healing*, held in reserve in case performers are accidentally injured while on stage. In the east storage area, lying forgotten under an unmarked crate, is a *bag of holding* and a *Silverquill primer* (see chapter 2).

ROSE STAGE FESTIVAL

Characters following the student who got their attention can make their way to the Rose Stage for the festival, where another student catches their attention. This person should also be a student the characters have interacted with previously. Read or paraphrase the following, altering the text to incorporate the student's name or other details:

> Cheers, jeers, and the buzzing of kazoos ring out as you draw near the Rose Stage on Silverquill College's campus. On the main stage, several students playact histrionically. One wears a flamboyant noble's costume, another wears a felt dragon's head, and a third wears a court jester's pantaloons. The audience roars with laughter as the scene plays out.

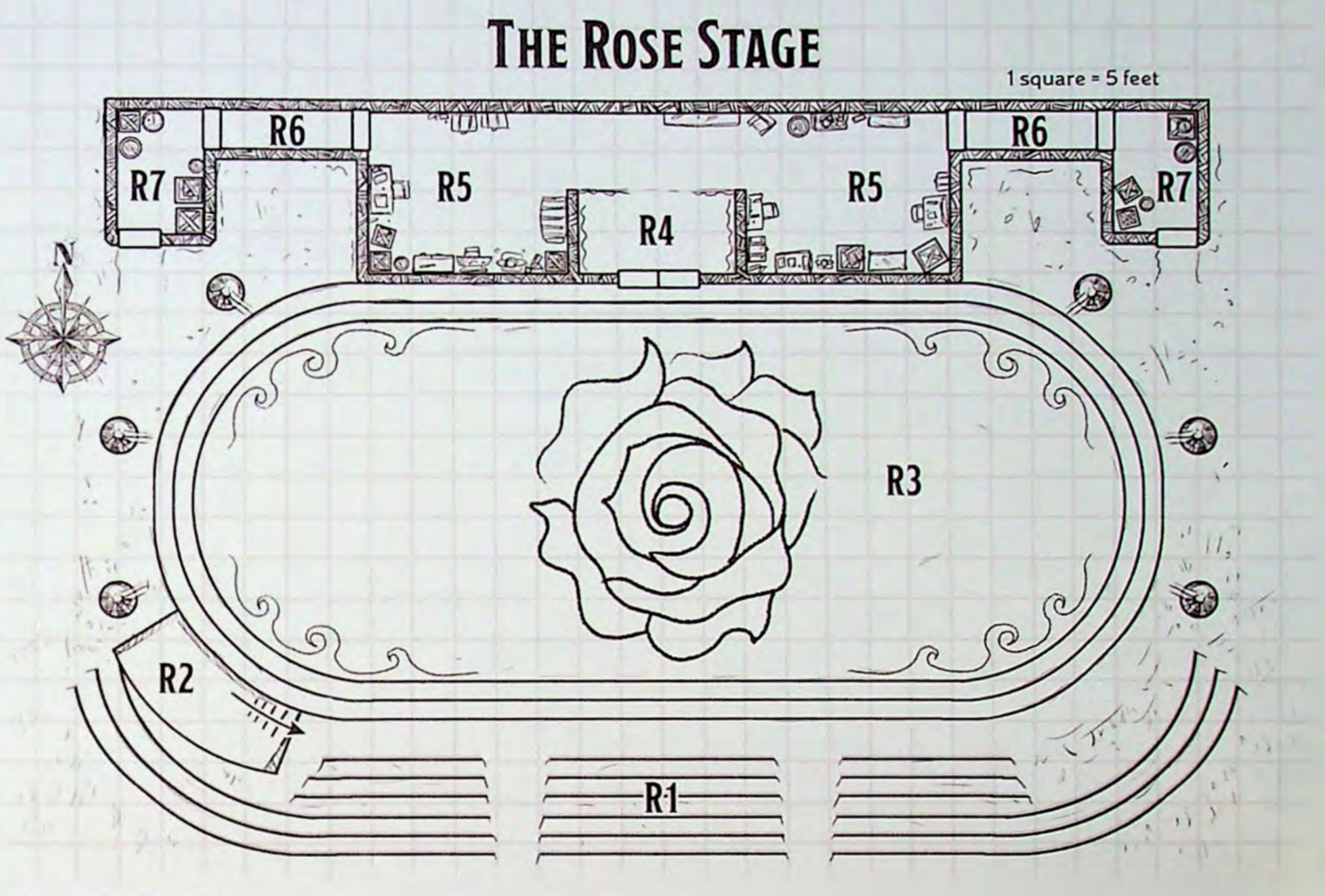
A familiar smiling figure approaches the characters. Brandishing a kazoo and laughing, the student says:

> "You here to act? Or maybe just to watch? Or maybe you're the musical talent? Either way, this is going to be great! I can't wait to see what you try!"

The Rose Stage Festival is an improvisational performance that the Playactors Drama Guild puts together every year, and everyone on campus is invited to participate. The goal is to create as much hilarity and fun as possible, and the antics of some festivals are talked about on campus for years.

THE SHOW

Members of the Playactors Drama Guild hand out lists of random character prompts to anyone who wants to try acting. Anyone who wishes to play a character on stage chooses a prompt, dons a few costume elements from the trunks of costumes provided by the Playactors Drama Guild, and lines up on the east end of the main stage (area R3).



Map 3.5: The Rose Stage

There, Quentillius Antiphiun Melentor III (neutral human **first-year student**; see the "Fellow Students" section) instructs a waiting participant to "tag in" to the ongoing performance and "tag out" someone currently on stage. Quentillius keeps the transitions narratively clean, while members of the crowd cheer, jeer, and shout ideas to the improvising actors. Other participants work the random props, set pieces, and sound effects the Playactors Drama Guild has strewn about the stage area to augment the improvised events.

Members of the crowd might play kazoos to musically accompany the drama on stage. A number of members of the Strixhaven Show Band Association are handing out kazoos from the orchestra pit (area R2), including student conductor Rubina Larkingdale (lawful neutral human **first-year student**; see the "Fellow Students" section).

The festival's improvised play continues until all volunteer performers have exhausted their prompts. More frequently, however, a faculty member needs to shut down the festival, which becomes increasingly rowdy later into the night.

The following subsections detail the ways in which the characters can join the fun.

SEAN MACDONALD

Perform on Stage

A character who wants to perform chooses a character prompt and whatever costume pieces catch their eye and then heads to the east side of the stage (area R3). After waiting a short while, Quentillius signals a break in the action so that the new performer can take the stage. The player character can act out their improv character in the performance any way they like. Raising the creativity beyond just acting to incorporate singing, rapping, or dancing is encouraged! No matter what approach the player takes to their character's performance, impressing the crowd also requires a successful DC 13 Charisma (Performance) check. (If another ability check or skill feels applicable to an unconventional performance, feel free to let the character make that check instead.) A successful ability check results in the crowd's cheering and whistling, while a failed check results in boos and jeers. Further, the character whose Charisma (Performance) check is highest earns a valuable reward from an appreciative professor after this event ends; see "A Professor's Appreciation."

To increase the level of the challenge—and the fun—you might have interested players roll their characters' prompts randomly on the Festival Character Prompts table.

Festival Character Prompts

d12	Prompt
1	Cowardly monarch
2	Brilliant but exasperated knight
3	Rampaging but erudite sea serpent
4	Furious ship's captain
5	Paranoid wizard
6	Businessperson transformed into a cat
7	Swashbuckling servant
8	Bawdy noble
9	Mage who can't control their magic
10	Toddler in an adult's body
11	Adult in a toddler's body
12	Very hungry monster

Handle Props

A character who doesn't want to perform can handle props from the ends of the stage. When Quentillius cues them, the character can bring one of the many prepared stage props to the performers, move a set piece around the stage, or improvise sound effects to augment the improvised play. This might include carrying wooden cutouts of painted waves during a nautical scene, rolling fake monsters near the actors when danger threatens and impersonating the monsters' snarls, handing dueling actors improbable "weapons," or the like. Responding to the cues in a way that complements the action on stage requires a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check.

When a character handles props, allow them to choose the props they like most from the Festival Props table or have them roll on that table. These props are scattered around the outer stage.

Though prop-handling characters have no way to know it, one of the wooden cutout monsters turns into a real owlbear in the next section!

Festival Props

d8	Prop
1	Wooden cutouts on wheels of an owlbear, a basilisk, and a chimera
2	Wooden cutouts of painted waves
3	A large wooden cutout of a ship
4	Rainclouds with glittery raindrops
5	Wooden cutouts of random elemental spells
6	Three enormous, baggy bodysuits made out of felt with hoods that look like teeth
7	Several out-of-tune instruments, including a hurdy-gurdy, a zither, and a mandolin
8	Six four-foot-tall scepters made of aluminum inlaid with "gems" made of shiny glass

Accompany with Kazoo

A character might highlight a performance by their friends—or razz an adversary—using one of the kazoos that Rubina and other members of the Strixhaven Show Band Association are handing out at area R2. Highlighting the antics on stage effectively requires a successful DC 13 Charisma (Performance) check (though another skill might be more applicable, depending on the character's goal). A successful check grants one character performing on stage advantage or disadvantage on their Charisma (Performance) check to perform.

Encourage a Performer

If a character shouts encouragement to another player character performing on stage, the on-stage character has advantage on their ability check to perform.

Heckle a Performer

A character might jeer at a performer on the stage. If they taunt a player character or the NPC partner of a player character, that character has disadvantage on their ability check to perform.

Relationship Encounter

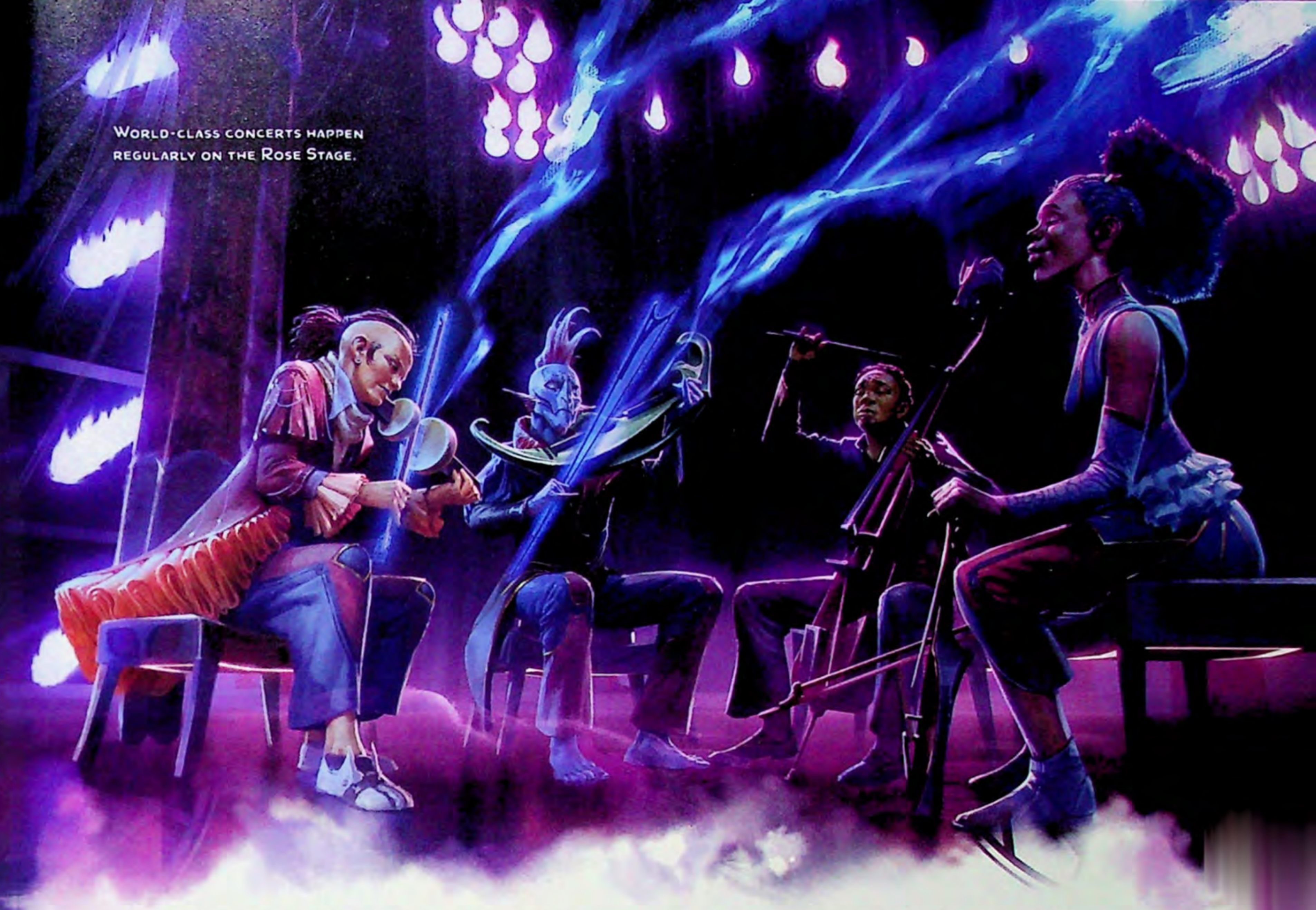
During the festival, characters might mingle with other students. If there are students the characters wish to earn Relationship Points with, treat this as a Relationship encounter, as described earlier in the chapter. Have players note the results of this encounter on their tracking sheets.

Exit, Pursued by an Owlbear

After the characters have all had a chance to take part in the performance, read or paraphrase the following:

> The crowd roars with laughter and the festival appears to be reaching its height—when suddenly, confused guffaws followed by screams of terror ring out.
>
> One of the stage props barrels away from its handler, monstrous shrieks coming from its frothing beak. What used to be a comically posed owlbear painted on wood is transforming into a real and enraged owlbear, and it's rampaging right toward you!

The owlbear prop turns into an actual attacking **owlbear**. Assume the owlbear is on whichever side of the stage is closest to the most characters. The player characters must jump into action quickly to defend the other students. When they do, if a character made a successful ability check during the Rose Stage Festival, they have advantage on their first attack against the owlbear.



WORLD-CLASS CONCERTS HAPPEN REGULARLY ON THE ROSE STAGE.

Further, because the characters learned about owlbears in their second Exam event of the term, any character who aced that Exam has advantage on all attack rolls during this encounter.

At the same time the characters are dealing with the owlbear, the other performers and stage crew step up in the background to deal with lesser threats as other props animate and begin to fly around the stage.

Once the characters defeat the owlbear, it turns back into a wooden prop and the magic infecting other objects in the area ends.

ENDING THE THREAT

If all the characters fall unconscious during this fight, Professor Johenne Totsky (neutral human **Silverquill professor of shadow**; see chapter 7) appears at the start of the next round and dispatches the threat. The professor, who was lingering in the area watching the performance, is as baffled as the characters as to why a stage prop would turn into a real monster.

IZZY

A PROFESSOR'S APPRECIATION

Once the characters have participated in the Rose Stage Festival and dispatched the owlbear threat, if she's not already on the scene, Professor Totsky approaches the characters and applauds them. She thanks them for dispatching the threat, and she compliments any character who made a successful ability check during the performance. A lover of theater who is immaculately dressed, the professor tells the characters that she recently commissioned a new cloak; she offers the cloak she's wearing in appreciation of the character whose Charisma (Performance) check to perform on stage was highest. The cloak is a *cloak of protection*.

EXAMINING THE OWLBEAR

Once the threat is ended, the characters can examine the owlbear to learn more about this incident. If they do, they find the same oily substance they might have found on the trunk during orientation, seen belched out by the frogs before the Firejolt Café race, or spotted on the cauldrons in Bow's End Tavern.

If she hasn't already entered the scene, Professor Totsky arrives while the characters examine the substance. She initially shrugs it off as irrelevant, given that its magic has already faded. But if the characters explain everything they've seen at the past year's strange events to reveal the unseen connections between those events, Professor Totsky realizes what's going on.

She explains eldritch balm to the characters and says she believes it's likely that the Sedgemoor waters used to brew the latest batch of eldritch balm were corrupted in some way. She doesn't necessarily suspect foul play but mentions that, in the past, students have been caught practicing forbidden magic in the more remote parts of Sedgemoor, the bayou that encompasses Witherbloom College's campus. Such sinister magic might be responsible for the balm's corruption, but a random surge of wild magic is an equally likely explanation in her mind. In any case, this corruption must have caused objects treated with the eldritch balm and creatures that came into contact with it to take on temporary—and dangerous—magical properties.

Professor Totsky gives the characters a flask of holy water and explains that pouring it into the underwater spring whose waters are used to create eldritch balm will settle the waters and prevent further corruption. She describes the location of the spring (area S7 on map 3.6) to help the characters find it. She urges the characters to take on this task so she can immediately track down the rest of the contaminated balm and remove it from objects on campus.

SECRETS IN SEDGEMOOR

The day after the incident at the Rose Stage Festival, the characters are scheduled to collect spell components from Sedgemoor and bring those samples back to Professor Lang, who teaches their Magical Physiologies course. This gives them a convenient opportunity to investigate that area on behalf of Professor Totsky.

The characters know that they must pour the flask of holy water given to them by Professor Totsky into an underwater spring somewhere in area S7. Doing so should prevent future flare-ups of the wild magic that tainted the eldritch balm behind all the strange campus mishaps. In addition, they can find Murgaxor's journal, which points to a spellcaster's troublesome meddling, in area S7.

When the characters venture into Sedgemoor, read or paraphrase the following to set the scene:

> Your expedition has brought you to one of the more dismal parts of Sedgemoor, the bayou that encompasses the Witherbloom campus. Muddy swamp water flows between raised islets covered with fungi and foliage. Large tree stumps jut out of the water in random places. A pair of rickety wooden docks and two wooden huts are the only indication that people ever come here.

COLLECTING SPELL COMPONENTS

The characters start out at the southeast corner (area S1) of the Sedgemoor map. They can collect the spell components from areas S2, S3, and S7. At the start, allow only one successful check per islet, to encourage the characters to explore. Once all three islets are explored, the characters can make any number of attempts to gather components on any islet.

SEDGEMOOR

Encompassing Witherbloom College's campus, Sedgemoor is a wild bayou known for the range of strange creatures that call it home. It is also a rich source of fungi, herbs, spider silk, and other prime components for spells and potions.

Sedgemoor isn't usually dangerous, and it's routine for students to be sent here as part of their coursework.

SEDGEMOOR FEATURES

Sedgemoor has the following features:

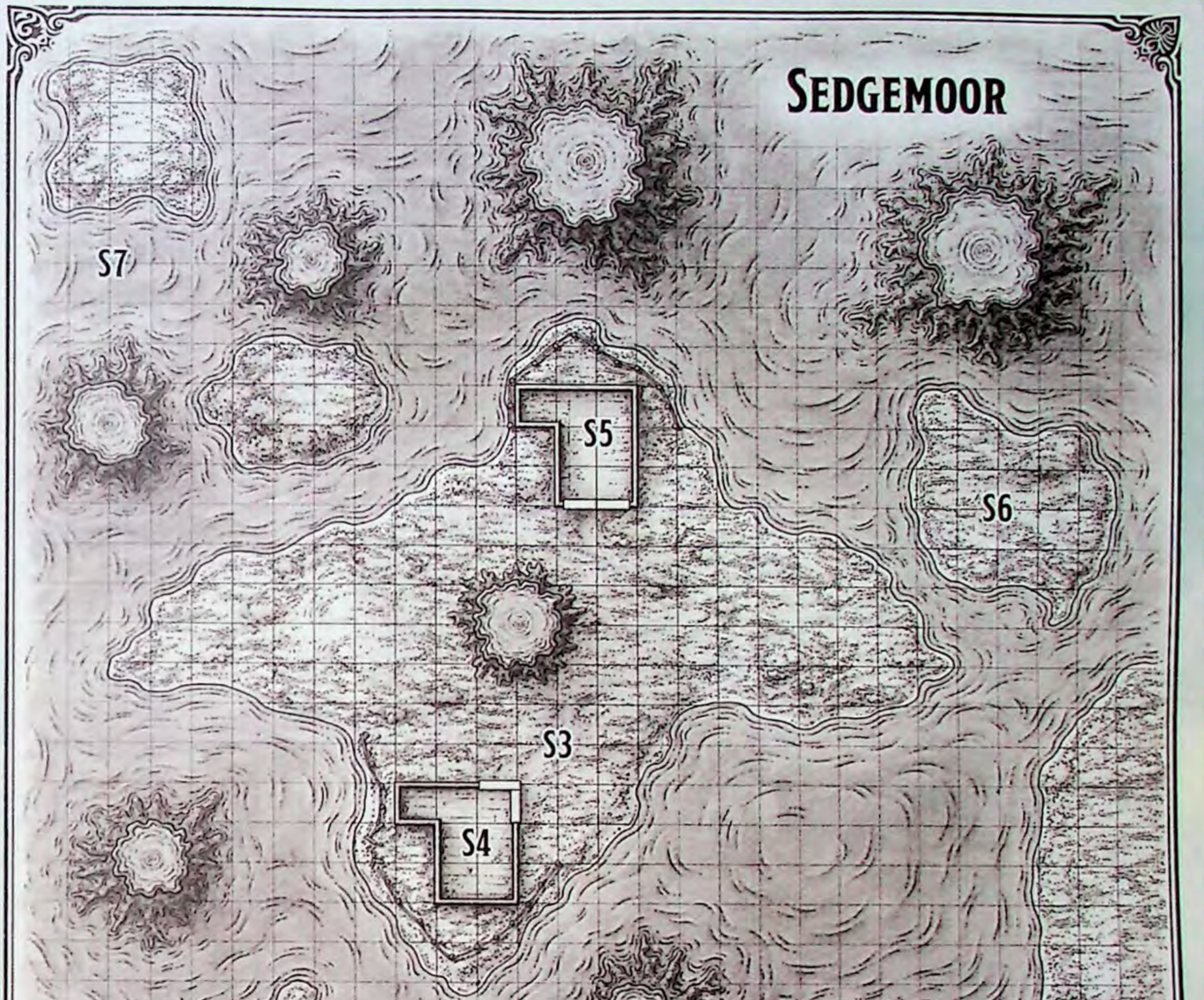
Building Doors. The doors to the research sheds (areas S4 and S5) are unlocked.

Swamp Water. The watery areas on the map are shallow along the shore, growing deeper off the map. Characters walking between islets and tree stumps sink several inches in mud and water, making all these areas difficult terrain.

Tree Stumps. Stumps protrude 5 feet above the surface of the water. Their slippery and unstable surfaces mean that climbing onto a stump without falling requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check as part of the move.

SEDGEMOOR LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to map 3.6. All descriptions assume the characters are exploring this area during the day.


SEDGEMOOR
S7
S5
S6
S3
S4
S2
S1
N
W
E
S
1 square = 5 feet

MIKE SCHLEY

MAP 3.6: SEDGEMOOR

Area S7 holds the contaminated spring that is the root cause of the strange manifestations of magic on campus over the previous months. If you're running this as a campaign, Murgaxor's journal is also in area S7. As the characters explore, you can have them spot the bubbling of the underwater spring in that area to draw them in.

S1. Marsh Banks

> Beyond some scrubby bushes, the solid ground here gives way to the muddy swamp. Rickety wooden docks jut into the water, but there are no rafts or boats nearby.

Rafts and shallow-bottomed punts are normally kept here, but they are all currently in use by Witherbloom students on assignments farther out on the water. The characters need to make their way into Sedgemoor on foot or by other means.

S2. South Islet

This is one of the three islets (along with areas S3 and S7) where the characters can collect spell components for Professor Lang.

Any character who ventures into the swamp on the west side of this islet stumbles into an area of quicksand. See chapter 5 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details.

S3. Central Islet

> The largest islet in this part of the swamp, this landmass features two wooden research sheds with an ancient tree stump between them.

This is one of the three islets (along with areas S2 and S7) where the characters can collect spell components for Professor Lang.

Hiding behind the tree stump in the center of this islet are two snarling **worgs**, which were drawn here by the strange magic in the area. The worgs are hostile and attack as soon as any character sets foot on the island, snarling, "The dark magic! Give it to us!" They run off if the characters reduce one or both of them to 13 or fewer hit points.

S4. South Research Shed

One of two small research sheds on the central islet, this building holds supplies and equipment for Witherbloom students and faculty doing research in Sedgemoor. Moss and fungi harvesting kits can be found here. Each kit weighs 1 pound, consists of various cutting and collecting tools, and grants advantage on a character's Intelligence (Nature) checks to harvest spell components.

S5. North Research Shed

The second of two small research sheds serves as a gathering area for Witherbloom students and faculty when classes take place in the bayou.

Treasure. Any search of this area turns up two *potions of healing*.

S6. East Islet

This is one of the three islets (along with areas S2 and S3) where the characters can collect spell components for Professor Lang.

A **swarm of poisonous snakes** nests on this island. It attacks when a character sets foot on this islet, though the snakes disperse and flee if the swarm is reduced to 5 hit points or fewer.

S7. Underwater Spring

> A steady, burbling flow of water disturbs the surface of the swamp just to the north of this small islet.

An underground spring flows here. If the characters are quiet for a moment when they are within 20 feet of this area, they can hear the spring burbling (and tell which direction the sound is coming from).

After the characters arrive in this area, have each of them make a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check. Those who succeed notice the waters in this area rippling unnaturally. The muddy Sedgemoor waters suddenly spray into the sky like a geyser and a mighty chittering echoes throughout the swamp. A **giant scorpion**, corrupted by the same menace the characters are hoping to stop, was lurking here to ambush prey. If all the characters failed the Wisdom (Perception) checks, the scorpion has advantage on its first attack roll against each of those characters. The scorpion is berserk and fights to the death.

Clearing the Waters. With the scorpion defeated, the characters must pour their holy water from Professor Totsky into the spring. When they do, the liquid from Totsky's flask purifies the spring, ending the threat of corruption.

Murgaxor's Journal. If you're running all four adventures in this book as a campaign, a character spots a small, oilskin-wrapped journal sitting atop a small stump. Water damage has rendered much of the journal unreadable, but what remains reveals sinister thoughts. It's clear that some nefarious

STRANGE CREATURES LIVE IN THE SWAMPY AREAS OF STRIXHAVEN'S CAMPUS. SOMETIMES THOSE CREATURES ARE DANGEROUS.

EKATERINA BURMAK

personality has been experimenting with life-draining magic in the marsh and has been doing so for some time.

The journal belonged to the evil Murgaxor; it slipped out of his pocket while he practiced the corrupting magic that caused this academic year's mishaps. The journal notes that Murgaxor's last step in this scheme involved the Rose Stage Festival, so it's clear he has no more immediate plans to threaten campus. However, this isn't the end of his villainy—the true extent becomes clear in later adventures.

END OF THE YEAR

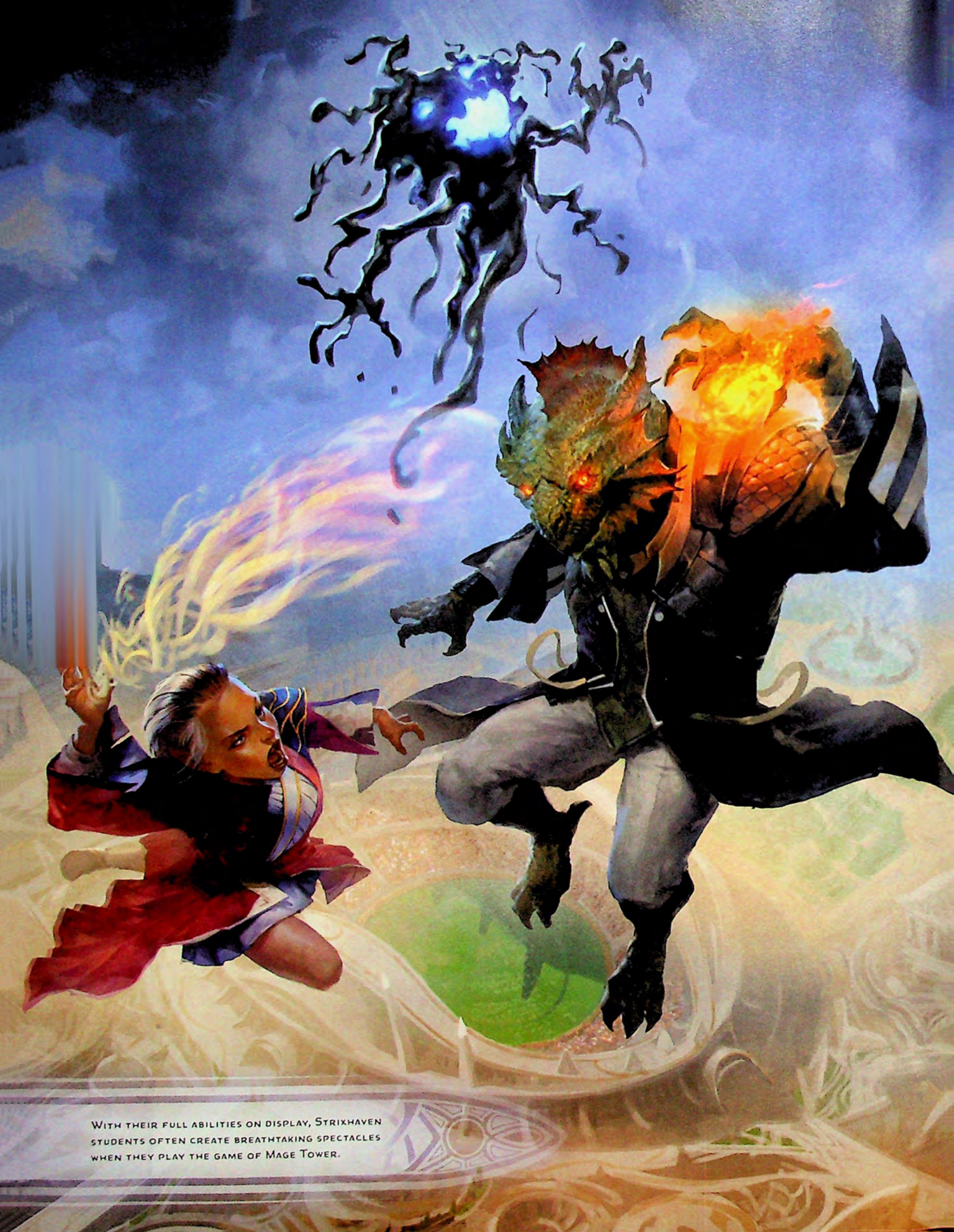
After the characters complete their investigation of the Sedgemoor spring, no more significant events happen before the end of the year. Wrap up any ongoing roleplaying scenes or Relationship interests the characters are pursuing this academic year.

CAMPUS HEROES

Thanks to the central role they played in dealing with the outbreaks of kerfuffles, the characters have become well known across the entire campus. Professors thank them for their bravery, and the characters are named Students of the Year in a lavish ceremony on the central campus attended by their Friends, Rivals, and Beloveds, as well as any professors they've encountered this academic year. They're also vaunted in the *Strixhaven Star* newspaper as heroes. Feel free to use additional roleplaying scenes and other details to reinforce how the characters' actions have made a name for them!

ADVANCE TO 4TH LEVEL!

Each character advances to 4th level at the end of this adventure.



With their full abilities on display, Strixhaven students often create breathtaking spectacles when they play the game of Mage Tower.

CHAPTER 4

HUNT FOR MAGE TOWER

IN THIS ADVENTURE, THE CHARACTERS return to Strixhaven University as second-year students. As the year gets underway, the characters' peers urge them to form a team and compete in a high-profile game of Mage Tower. They'll investigate the odd behavior of the magical creatures at the game's center while they prepare for the big game. And throughout the year, nefarious forces strew havoc across the campus—right up to the characters' fateful game day at Strixhaven Stadium. Will the characters unveil and thwart the threats before something terrible befalls the event?

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

Here's what you need to know to run the adventure in this chapter, whether you're running it as part of a campaign or as a standalone adventure.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

This adventure assumes the characters are 4th level when it begins. The Second-Year Level Advancement table summarizes when the characters gain levels during the adventure.

SECOND-YEAR LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

Level	Reached When Characters ...
5th	Complete the first Scrivening and Symbology Exam
6th	Finish the adventure

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

Before this adventure begins, the characters must choose one of Strixhaven's five colleges to join: Silverquill, Prismari, Witherbloom, Lorehold, or Quandrix. This choice can happen "off screen" or as part of the preparation for this adventure. See chapter 1 for more information about joining a Strixhaven college and the academic counselors assigned to students in their second year.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

The dangerous events the characters face in this adventure are the work of two mage hunters—vicious monsters described in chapter 7. The mastermind Murgaxor Grenshel has bent these creatures to his will as part of his effort to weaken Strixhaven and achieve immortality.

SVETLIN VELINOV

A STANDALONE ADVENTURE

If you're running this adventure as a standalone, the mage hunters are acting independently, not as part of Murgaxor's schemes. These creatures have broken from their Oriq associates and enacted their own scheme to weaken Strixhaven. Believing their success will earn them a place of prestige among the university's enemies, they plot to bring down Strixhaven's newest star pupils: the characters.

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Use the Second-Year Encounters table for random encounters on campus during this adventure.

SECOND-YEAR ENCOUNTERS

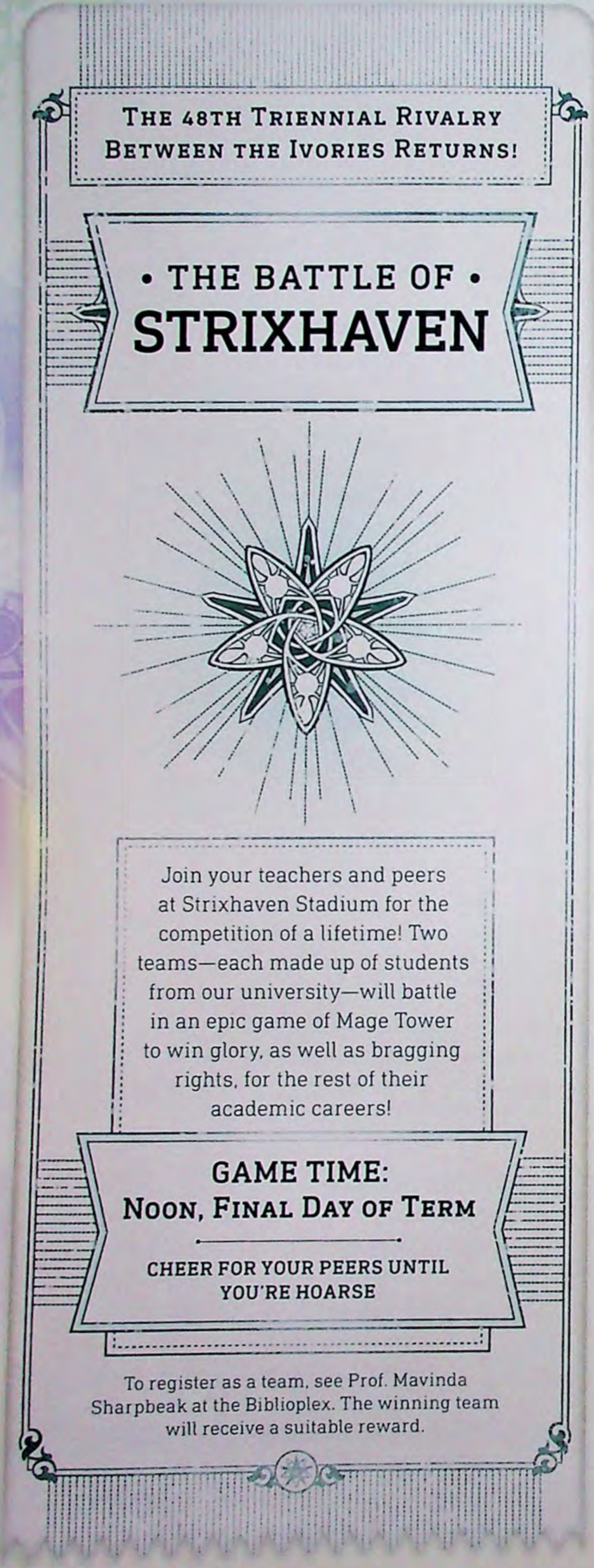
d10	Encounter
1–4	2 **awakened trees**, pretending to be Feywild guardians and refusing to let students access an important academic area
5–6	1 **basilisk** accompanied by 2 **gargoyles** that falsely insist the basilisk turned them to stone
7–8	1 **otyugh** who calls itself the Garbage King and is terrorizing campus facilities
9–10	1 **troll** and 1 **ettin** who falsely insist they're students

STUDENT SCHEDULES

Before the adventure, have the players choose at least three courses their characters are taking this year, either by coming up with the courses or by rolling on the Second-Year Courses table. Inform them that the characters are also enrolled in a required course, Scrivening and Symbology.

SECOND-YEAR COURSES

d10	Course	Offered By
1	Applied Computational Magic	Quandrix
2	Basic Arcane Artifacts	Lorehold
3	Electro-choreography	Prismari
4	Historical Figures in Magic	Lorehold
5	Introduction to Reanimation	Witherbloom
6	Life Auras and Necrosis	Witherbloom
7	Linguistics in Spellcasting	Silverquill
8	Pyromancy and the Arts	Prismari
9	Quantitative Arcano-physics	Quandrix
10	Verbal Components and the Law	Silverquill



THE 48TH TRIENNIAL RIVALRY
BETWEEN THE IVORIES RETURNS!

• THE BATTLE OF •
STRIXHAVEN

Join your teachers and peers at Strixhaven Stadium for the competition of a lifetime! Two teams—each made up of students from our university—will battle in an epic game of Mage Tower to win glory, as well as bragging rights, for the rest of their academic careers!

GAME TIME:
NOON, FINAL DAY OF TERM

CHEER FOR YOUR PEERS UNTIL YOU'RE HOARSE

To register as a team, see Prof. Mavinda Sharpbeak at the Biblioplex. The winning team will receive a suitable reward.

BACK IN SESSION

Once the characters have chosen their colleges and cemented their other second-year decisions, it's time to kick off this adventure.

The academic year has barely dawned when the characters wrap up a day of their new courses and head toward Bow's End Tavern on the central campus for some socializing.

In this scene, the characters learn about the Battle of Strixhaven, a Mage Tower game. Another student is part of this scene—ideally a student the characters have interacted with, or you may choose another student from the "Fellow Students" section in chapter 3.

When you're ready to begin, read or paraphrase the following, altering the text to incorporate the student's name or other details:

> Your peers' shouts of camaraderie punctuate the air as you finish your first second-year classes for the day. Nearby you see Bow's End Tavern, where you'll find friends waiting.

A student runs up to the characters, shouting and waving a flyer. Pausing to catch their breath, the student grins and stuffs the flyer in a character's hand. The student exclaims:

> "It's happening—the Mage Tower game! The professors invited the student body to field two Mage Tower teams for a game at the end of the year. It's the Battle of Strixhaven, and the winners and their supporters get bragging rights for life! All of us think you'd make the best team. You'd win for sure!
>
> "If you're in, you can register your team with Professor Sharpbeak. Come on—we'll talk you into it over Curtie's caster's stew!"

Show the players the Battle of Strixhaven flyer. As Strixhaven students, the characters are familiar with the game Mage Tower. Share the information below with the players.

THE GAME OF MAGE TOWER

Mage Tower is one of Strixhaven's most common student games. The Battle of Strixhaven is an intramural championship held every three years in Strixhaven Stadium for bragging rights among the student body. For more about this event, see the "Battle of Strixhaven" section.

Mage Tower's Rules

Here are the rules of Mage Tower:

- Each of the two teams has an equal number of students, usually not exceeding five.
- Each team is represented by a small mascot creature that reflects one of Strixhaven's colleges, as described in the "Mascots" section of chapter 1.
- When the game begins, the two mascots are placed on high towers at opposite ends of the field of play.
- Each team tries to steal the opposing mascot and transport it back to the tower at their end of the field. Doing so scores one point.
- The game occurs in three phases of 20 minutes each.
- The team that scores the most points by the end of the third phase wins the game.
- Anything that could cause damage to a participant, mascot, or spectator or that would damage the field of play in any way is prohibited. Breaking this rule results in expulsion from the game.
- Questionable use of magic can be called as a foul by the game's referee. A faculty member fills that post during official games.
- Participants who accumulate three fouls are ejected from the game. Teams may not replace participants who foul out.

Forming a Team

Once the characters decide to form one of the two Mage Tower teams for the Battle of Strixhaven, they must register the team with Professor Mavinda Sharpbeak (campus counselor and owlin **Silverquill professor of radiance**; see chapter 7). Their team includes all the characters; the characters might recruit student NPCs to join their team, although filling their roster up to five participants isn't required. The opposing team has an equal number of participants. Multiple teams may register for the tournament; the faculty choose two to compete in the Battle of Strixhaven. The characters' team is chosen to compete along with a team that consists of their Rivals and other NPCs.

More information about the Battle of Strixhaven and the opposing team is provided later in this adventure. The Mage Tower game isn't until the end of the academic year, but preparing for it plays a key role in this adventure.

If you wish, roleplay the scene in which the characters register their team with Professor Sharpbeak. The owlin counselor can be found in the Biblioplex near the Hall of Oracles. There, she's helping direct new first-year students to vital places on campus. For a description and map of the Biblioplex (map 3.1), see chapter 3.

If characters don't immediately leap at the chance to form a Mage Tower team for the Battle of Strixhaven, emphasize that every peer they speak with wants to see them participate. In addition to social rewards, the characters learn that participating in the Battle of Strixhaven earns them a permanent commendation on their student record, as well as a monetary prize of half of their tuition for this academic year waived. Effectively, this means each character receives 400 gp if their team wins.

Mascots Everywhere!

When the characters register their team name with Professor Sharpbeak, the owlin counselor's eyes briefly dart about with trepidation. She asks the characters to walk with her outside the Biblioplex to discuss an important matter.

She says the following in a confiding voice:

> "It's fortunate that you've found me now. This Mage Tower game is my event to organize, but everything is already going wrong.
>
> "You see, I need to tag the college mascots on campus—those little magical creatures that roam the grounds. We use them as mascots for our Mage Tower games. If the deans find out that some of the mascots aren't cataloged, my reputation will be ruined!
>
> "Before classes began, I corralled the mascots on an island in Sedgemoor. But before I finished cataloging them, a half-dozen escaped and vanished. This morning, I heard students chattering about mascots causing a commotion on the outer grounds of Wiltroot Hall."

The professor rifles through her bag and pulls out a cheesecloth sack filled with small woven bands, each embroidered with a number. She continues:

> "Each of them must be tagged with these bands. But I can't do it myself. With the start of classes, I'm buried under work.
>
> "I've seen how you handle yourselves, and I'm impressed with your skills. Could you head to Wiltroot Hall on Witherbloom's campus and discreetly slip these bands onto every mascot you find? I'd be grateful. What's more, I'd owe you a favor. What do you say?"

Encourage the characters to take on Professor Sharpbeak's favor within the first few days of this adventure. For ease of running this adventure, it's best that the characters complete this event before the "Practice Makes Perfect" section. If the characters are reluctant, reinforce that the mascots are bound to disperse eventually and that fulfilling Professor Sharpbeak's request will become more difficult the longer they wait.

When the characters are ready to act on Professor Sharpbeak's request, move on to the description of Wiltroot Hall below.

CHOOSING A MAGE TOWER MASCOT

As mentioned in "The Game of Mage Tower," each team in a Mage Tower game chooses a mascot creature to represent them and to serve as a focal point of the game's scoring. If the characters discuss finding a mascot to represent their team, Professor Sharpbeak assures them that any mascot they find at Wiltroot Hall could serve as their team mascot. If the characters don't ask about mascots now, you can prompt them to choose a mascot later in the academic year, when the game approaches. Mascots don't confer benefits in the game, although Mage Tower participants are often sentimental about their mascots.

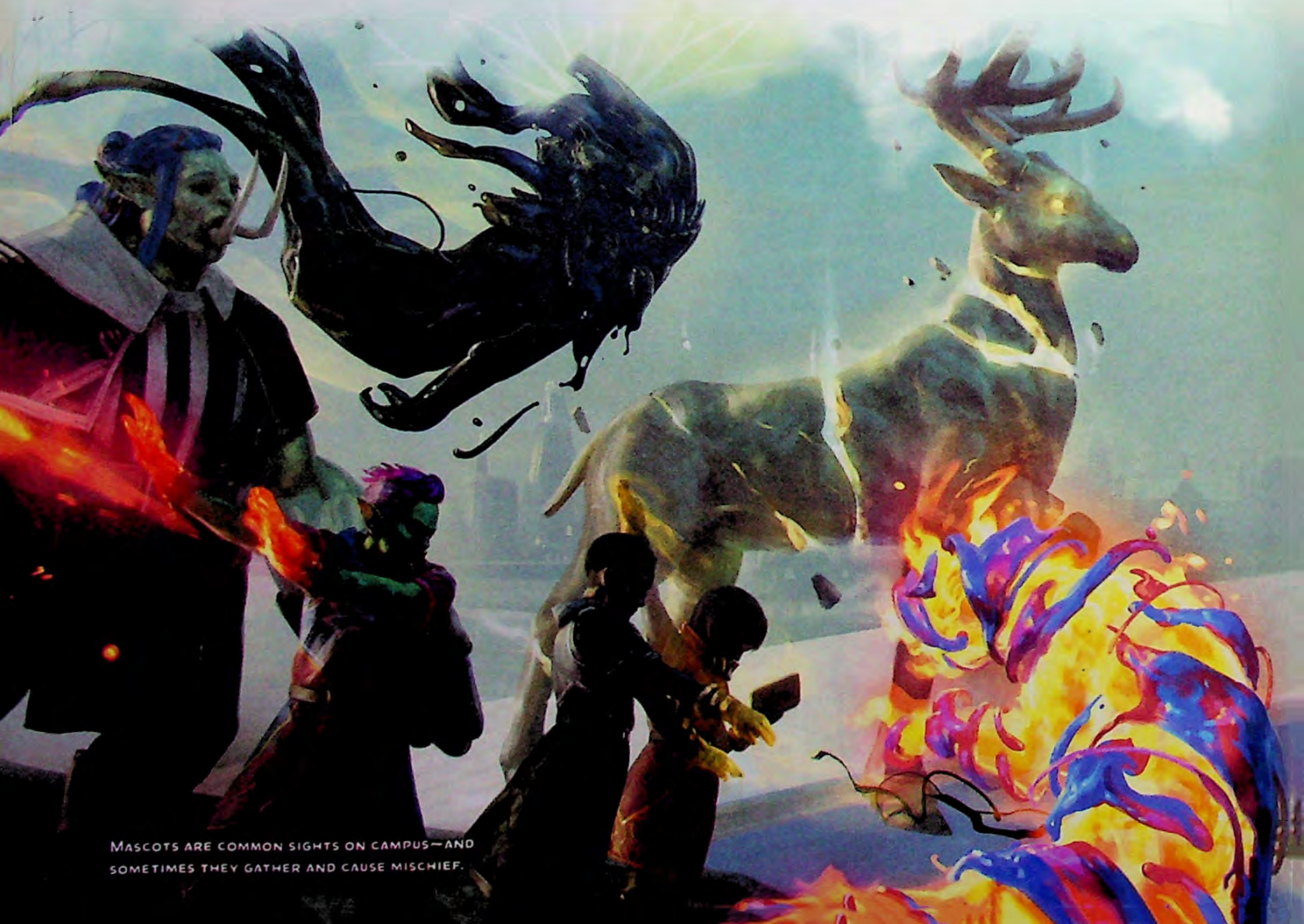
WILTROOT HALL

Despite its location on the outer grounds of Witherbloom College's campus, Wiltroot Hall is normally a safe locale. But the activities of Murgaxor and his mage hunter servitors have drawn lurking dangers from more remote parts of the bayou.

As he grows more proficient in his ability to siphon creatures' energy to power his magic, Murgaxor is practicing lesser forms of the magic that will eventually culminate in his destructive ritual in chapter 6. Evidence of his magic persists in area W5. The strange energy of his magic has drawn creatures to the area around Wiltroot Hall and made them unusually aggressive. Professor Sharpbeak's stray mascots have also been drawn to the area, though they are no more aggressive than usual.

A STANDALONE ADVENTURE

If you're running this chapter as a standalone adventure, the bayou creatures' aggressive presence is a result of the mage hunters' activity in the area, not Murgaxor's magic. Characters can find traces of the mage hunters' presence in area W5.



MASCOTS ARE COMMON SIGHTS ON CAMPUS—AND SOMETIMES THEY GATHER AND CAUSE MISCHIEF.

MASCOT HUNTING

Six mascots escaped Professor Sharpbeak's custody and fled to the grounds of Wiltroot Hall, drawn to the bog's latent decay.

Finding. As described in the "Wiltroot Hall Locations" section below, the six missing mascots can be found in areas W2, W3, W6, W9, W10, and W11.

Cataloging. Affixing one of Professor Sharpbeak's bands onto a mascot typically requires an action and a successful DC 14 Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check, though you may allow other types of ability checks.

For example, a character who tries to trick a mascot into approaching can make a Charisma (Deception) check, or a character who uses gestures and a calm voice to convince a mascot to wear the band can make a Charisma (Persuasion) check.

The spirit statue in area W6 requires special coaxing to wear the band. See that area for more details.

Investigating. Once the characters catch their third mascot, a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana or Nature) check reveals that a sinister magical signature is drawing the mascots here—the sensation is something like a rotten-smelling tingle in the back of one's nostrils. The exact nature of the unsettling latent magic isn't clear, but it seems to fundamentally involve drawing energy from living creatures.

WILTROOT HALL FEATURES

The hall and surrounding grounds have the following features (areas not numbered are easily traversable but devoid of significant features or creatures):

Building Ceilings. The ceiling of Wiltroot Hall (area W1) is 40 feet high. The ceilings of the observation huts (areas W2, W7, W9, W10, and W14) are 10 feet high.

Building Doors. The doors to Wiltroot Hall (area W1) and the observation huts (areas W2, W7, W9, W10, and W14) are unlocked.

Swampy Stinkbrush. The areas surrounding the clearings and walkways contain a mixture of nearly impassable, awful-smelling deep bog and thick undergrowth. These areas are difficult terrain if the characters want to explore them, but it's clear that few creatures would intentionally pass through these areas.

Walkways. The walkways and the platform underneath the hall are made of magically reinforced wood and enclosed by short guard rails. The walkways are two feet above the swamp. Hopping over the guard rail into the bog or clearings below, or pulling oneself up onto a walkway from the ground below, requires an action but no ability check.

RANDY VARGAS

WILTROOT HALL LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to map 4.1. All descriptions assume the characters are exploring this area during the day. There are no classes taking place here when the characters arrive, so the area is sparsely populated.

W1. HALL AND LEARNING PLATFORM

> The trunk of an enormous dead tree rises nearly one hundred feet in the air. Near the ground, the wide trunk has been hollowed out and carved to form doors, windows, and a spacious learning center. Surrounding the tree is a wooden platform that overlooks the bog and walkways beyond.

This area is devoid of faculty, staff, or students, leaving the building full of class supplies. Up to three herbalism kits or poisoner's kits could be crafted from these materials, as well as up to three vials of antitoxin and two *potions of healing*.

W2. OBSERVATION HUT A

> The small hut in this clearing has a heavily thatched roof and a rickety door that swings open to reveal a sparse interior. A few wooden chairs and a heavy table with an attached cabinet make up the hut's furnishings.

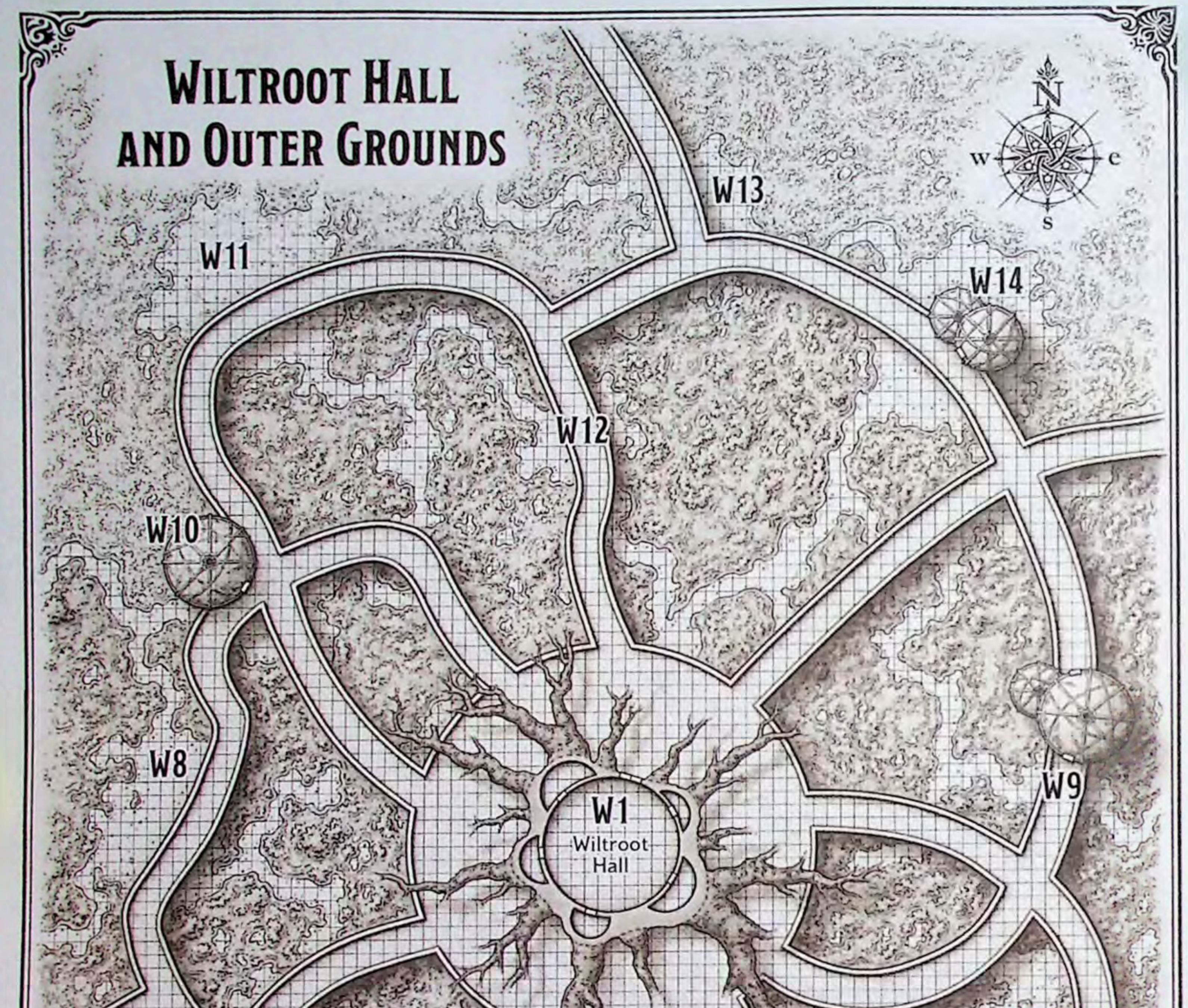
The clearing outside the hut is uninhabited.

Mascot. Opening the table's cabinet inside the hut reveals a **pest mascot** (see chapter 7) gnawing on a cracked, strange-looking stone. The pest is one of the mascots the characters must catalog for Professor Sharpbeak, as mentioned in the "Mascot Hunting" section earlier.

Treasure. The cracked stone the pest is gnawing on is an *Ioun stone* (awareness). The stone is malfunctioning and was discarded here. A character who tinkers with the *Ioun stone* for 1 minute and succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check mends the item so it functions as intended.

W3. SOUTHWEST CLEARING

> Although the spongy ground here is covered in moss, it's easily traversable in comparison to the surrounding brush. A raised wooden walkway nearby overlooks this open area.



Wiltroot Hall and Outer Grounds
N
W
E
S
W13
W11
W14
W12
W10
W8
W9
W1
Wiltroot Hall
W6
W5
W3
W2
W7
W4
1 square = 5 feet

Map 4.1: Wiltroot Hall and Outer Grounds

Mike Schley

SOME PESTS IN SEDGEMOOR, ELUDING CAPTURE, GROW TO PRODIGIOUS SIZE.

This clearing appears to be empty. However, a DC 13 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals movement in the western part of the surrounding brush. If the characters linger here for a round, they catch the attention of two **ankhegs**. The aggressive creatures attack, retreating back into the brush only if the characters reduce one or both of them to 10 hit points or fewer.

Mascot. Once the ankhegs are dispatched, the characters see an **inkling mascot** (see chapter 7) poke its head out from the underbrush nearby. The inkling is one of the mascots the characters must catalog for Professor Sharpbeak, as mentioned in the "Mascot Hunting" section earlier.

W4. SOUTHERN OUTSKIRTS

> This open clearing features a notable pool of black, sludgy refuse in the southern corner.

If the characters approach the refuse, it reveals itself to be an aggressive **black pudding**. The black pudding has eaten the remnants of creatures slain in this region recently, so it's Huge. Its game statistics are otherwise the same. The black pudding tries to flee when reduced to 10 hit points or fewer, as do any puddings resulting from it splitting.

EKATERINA BURMAK

W5. SOUTHERN CLEARING

> A ring of peat, decayed leaves, and beetle-infested animal skulls sit in the middle of this open clearing. The stench of rot is strong.

This clearing holds two clues to the evil activity taking place in this part of the bayou.

Mage Hunter Chitin. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a piece of chipped chitin plating. This plating sloughed off the mage hunters while they lingered here, but the characters can identify it only if they're familiar with mage hunters. If a character shows the plating to a faculty member, the faculty member says it could have come from a dangerous creature but is unsure of its origin.

Murgaxor's Scrawls. A successful DC 17 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals illegible scrawls in the dirt that match the writing in the journal the characters found in Sedgemoor last academic year.

W6. SOUTHEASTERN CLEARING

> Two lumps of slimy vegetation and moss stand prominently in the northeast corner of this clearing.

If the characters approach the two lumps, a guttural gurgle emits from them in tandem. Rising to stand is a fungal, mossy beast that groans, "Disturbed! I am disturbed!" before it attacks the characters. This momentarily animated fungal mass is a Plant but otherwise uses the stat block of an **ettin**. When it's reduced to 0 hit points, the creature melts back into the spongy bog floor.

Mascot. Once the fungal mass is dispatched, the characters can see a **spirit statue mascot** (see chapter 7) poke its head out from the underbrush nearby. The statue chuckles and says, "I'm quite bored of behaving as Professor Sharpbeak says. From now on, it's nothing but mischief! I'm a free spirit!" Convincing the statue that its work on campus is important and it should wear the band requires an action and a successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check. The statue is one of the mascots the characters must catalog for Profession Sharpbeak, as mentioned in the "Mascot Hunting" section earlier.

W7. OBSERVATION HUT B

> A small hut, its thatched roof drooping heavily, languishes in the southern edge of this clearing. A canopy of ancient growth looms over it.

If the characters approach the hut, it becomes clear that the leafy canopy is obscuring a **giant scorpion**. The aggressive creature attacks, as does the **ankheg** that steps out from the brush behind it. The creatures fight alongside each other—another unusual event in this area. If the characters reduce either creature to 10 hit points or fewer, it tries to flee.

Treasure. Herbalism supplies cover a heavy table inside this hut—enough to assemble one herbalism kit.

W8. WESTERN CLEARING

> You arrive at the clearing to find two of your classmates cautiously eying two large, yellow, viscous puddles oozing out from the underbrush near the west side of this clearing.

The characters' classmates Urzmaktok Grojsh and Melwythorne (two **Witherbloom apprentices**; see chapter 3) came here to explore the area. Ever the overachiever, Urzmaktok is taking advantage of the empty grounds to gather plant cuttings. He hopes to study them through the Fantastical Horticulture Club and petition his Witherbloom professors for extra credit if he successfully nurtures them. Timid for a third-year student, Urzmaktok convinced the lonely Melwythorne to accompany him to the grounds, both so Melwythorne might tell stories about his grove and so Melwythorne could protect him from any dangers.

The two Witherbloom students had decided to approach the puddles when the characters discover them. When anyone steps toward the puddles, they jiggle and solidify into two **ochre jellies**. If they see the characters, the jellies climb up onto the walkway in pursuit of prey. An ochre jelly reduced to 5 hit points or fewer tries to flee.

Witherbloom Peers. Once an altercation begins with the ochre jellies, Urzmaktok and Melwythorne flee to safety. After combat ends, any friendly word convinces them to help the characters track down and catalog the errant mascots. The characters have advantage on ability checks made to catalog a mascot if Urzmaktok or Melwythorne is present to lend assistance.

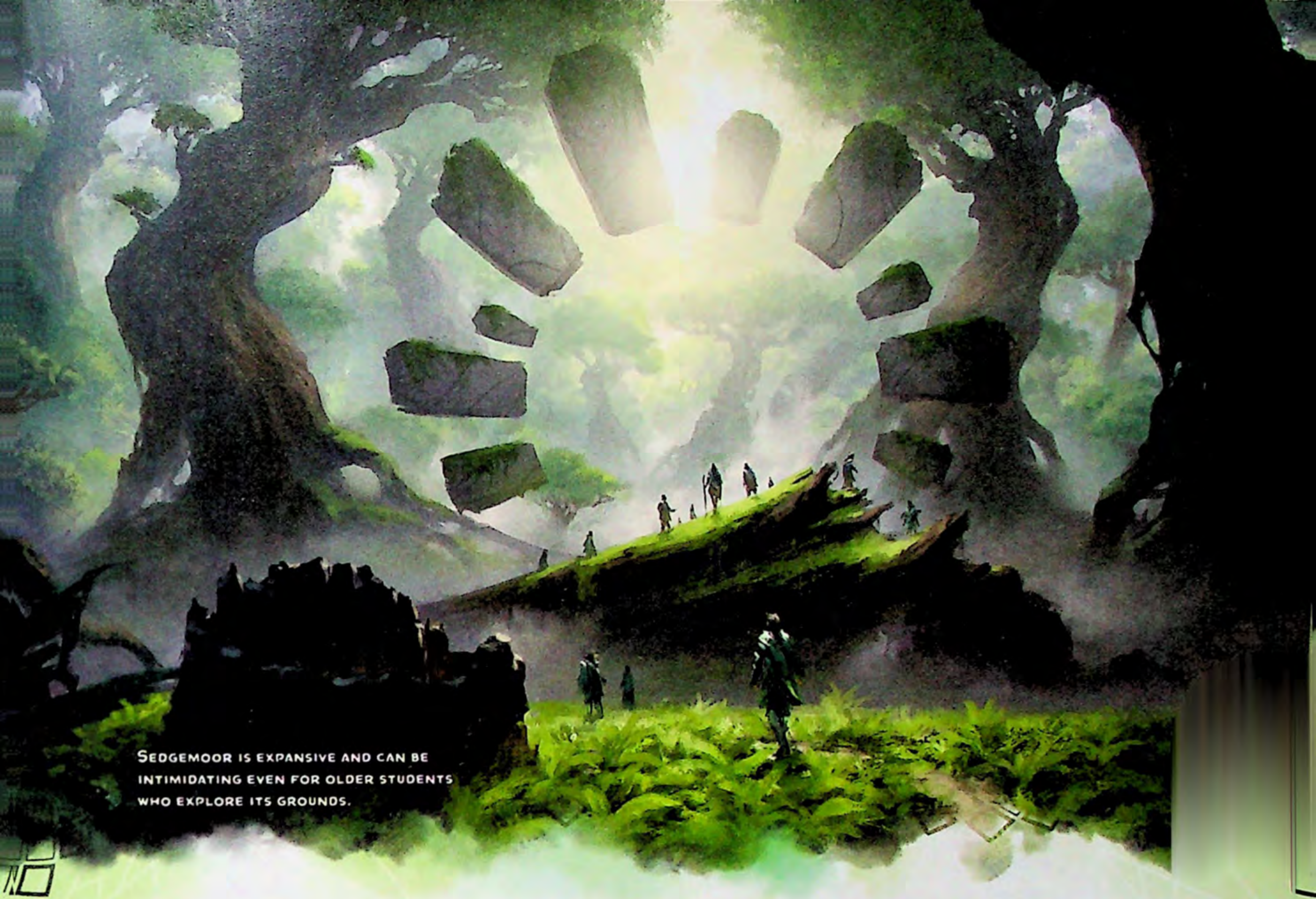
W9. OBSERVATION HUT C

> This large and well-maintained observation hut has one level above the walkway and another below it.

When the characters enter this building, they smell the pungent algae within a large fountain bubbling up from the center of the floor of the lower level. This is a naturally occurring spring. A pockmarked stone carving in the shape of a stylized, anthropomorphic wave surrounds and collects the water.

Javenesh Stoutclaw (neutral good owlin **Lorehold apprentice**; see chapter 3) stands next to the fountain, tilting his head in confusion and ruffling his feathers while seemingly talking to himself. If the characters approach the fountain, they see that Javenesh is speaking with a **water weird** submerged inside it. Unlike most water weirds, this creature, named Lothannep, can speak and understand Common.

Lothannep lives in the fountain when the university isn't in session. Lothannep was bound generations ago to a pool located in the wilds off Witherbloom's campus. Lothannep's mage master released it long ago, and it has been wandering about as it pleases since.



Sedgemoor is expansive and can be intimidating even for older students who explore its grounds.

PIOTR DURA

Lothannep likes this hut but will be ejected once the Witherbloom faculty discovers the weird's presence. A character can befriend Lothannep by engaging it in friendly conversation and succeeding on a DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check, with advantage if the character is a Witherbloom student. The water weird can be persuaded to relocate to another body of water, but only if a character toward which it is friendly suggests it.

Lorehold Peer. Javenesh traipsed to this area on an errand for Tulk Tusktooth, the manager of Bow's End Tavern. Tulk asked Javenesh to collect water from this fountain for use in Chef Curtie Axechucker's special dish. Javenesh is trying and failing to explain to Lothannep why he needs the water when the characters arrive.

A character who strikes up a friendship with the water weird can persuade Lothannep to leave the fountain long enough for Javenesh to fill his tankard. Whether or not the characters help Javenesh with his errand, the owlin is amenable to aiding them with their mission to find the lost mascots. A character has advantage on ability checks made to catalog a mascot if Javenesh is present to lend assistance.

Mascot. Once the characters have interacted with Lothannep, they see a **fractal mascot** (see chapter 7) emerge from under a table in the hut. The fractal is one of the mascots the characters must catalog for Professor Sharpbeak, as mentioned in the "Mascot Hunting" section earlier.

W10. Observation Hut D

> Stained paint brushes and empty watercolor palettes are scattered on a table in this small thatched-roof hut, which has a view of large clearings to the north and south.

The table in the building holds enough materials to create a set of painter's supplies and a set of calligrapher's supplies.

Mascot. A mischievous **art elemental mascot** (see chapter 7) rests underneath the table. The art elemental is one of the mascots the characters must catalog for Professor Sharpbeak, as mentioned in the "Mascot Hunting" section earlier.

W11. NORTHWESTERN CLEARING

> Tangled vines and trees draped with thick, hanging moss flank the northern edges of this large clearing. Movement in the foliage to the north gives the area a sense of being alive.

When a character ventures toward the north end of this clearing, two **giant elk** burst out of the foliage. The giant elk are angry and confused, and they attack. If an elk is reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, it regains its senses and tries to flee.

Mascot. Once the characters deal with the elk, they see a **pest mascot** (see chapter 7) emerge from the underbrush near where the elk rested. The pest is one of the mascots the characters must catalog for Professor Sharpbeak, as mentioned in the "Mascot Hunting" section earlier.

W12. NORTHERN CLEARING

> The wide wooden walkway here runs alongside a small clearing in the bog. A thick bed of mushrooms grows along the clearing's western edge.

A character who moves toward the clearing's western side sees a **giant boar** munching on the mushrooms. Like the elk in area W11, the boar is angry and confused and initially attacks. If it's reduced to 10 hit points or fewer, it tries to flee into the bog.

W13. NORTHERN OUTSKIRTS

> The boggy ground here feels firmer than at many of the other clearings, and flowering plants fill the area. It's a lovely, unexpected landscape within the marsh, as the delicate floral scents mix with those of peat and earth to perfume the air.

This area is devoid of any creatures.

Treasure. If the characters search this area, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals an emerald-colored glint in the stamen of a large pink flower. This is an *elemental gem* (emerald), discarded or perhaps lost. If the characters speak to Witherbloom faculty members about it, the characters learn that no one has reported the lost item, so they're permitted to keep it.

W14. OBSERVATION HUT E

> A small hut with a thatched roof sits beside the wooden walkway that cuts through this large clearing. Two bulbous masses of fungus and vegetation grow in the southeast corner behind the building.

If a character approaches the southeast corner behind the observation hut, two **brackish trudges** (see chapter 7) animate. Like the elk in area W11 and the boar in area W12, the trudges are initially hostile and attack. However, if a trudge is reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, it regains its senses and tries to flee.

REPORTING TO PROF. SHARPBEAK

When the characters catalog one or more mascots for Professor Sharpbeak and want to report back to her, they find the counselor in the Biblioplex. If the characters tell her about the dangers that lurked near Wiltroot Hall, she expresses shock at the aggressive fauna and promises to have faculty members secure the area promptly.

When the characters report the number of mascots they've cataloged, read:

> Professor Sharpbeak smiles. "You've saved me a lot of effort, students," she says. "Now I don't need to track them all down! Thank you for your assistance." She scribbles on a sheet of parchment and hands you the document.

The document entitles the characters to one free uncommon magic item of their choice from the Biblioplex's student store (area B5 of map 3.1 in chapter 3).

SCRIVENING AND SYMBOLOGY EXAM: GLYPH OF WARDING

During their second year at Strixhaven, the characters are enrolled together in a course called Scrivening and Symbology, which is held in a lecture hall in the Biblioplex (one of the areas marked B7 on map 3.1 in chapter 3). The course covers the basics of recognizing, deciphering, and understanding the magic behind arcane scripts and symbols. Over the course of the term, students learn how to tell scribbles and doodles from magically imbued symbols, and they study popular accounts of adventurers who've come across magic-based writing in their

Scribing magic is an important field of study at Strixhaven, as sloppiness can have strange effects.

travels. They also learn about common spells that incorporate writing and symbology in their casting. The course's professor is Brenneth Blackstone (chaotic good dhampir **Silverquill professor of shadow**; see chapter 7), a rising star in scriptology whose dynamic lectures are practically performance art.

This course's first Exam takes place a short while after the events of the "Mascots Everywhere!" section and tests students on their knowledge of scrivening and symbology, as expressed in *glyph of warding* spells. For more information about the rules used for Exams, see chapter 3.

Studying Phase

The day before the Exam, the characters can study the course material. A character can use any ability check and skill during the Studying phase.

Once you've asked each player how their character is approaching the Studying phase, resolve that phase by having each character who studies make a DC 15 ability check. Make sure players keep track of their characters' rerolls and apply them during the Testing phase.

Testing Phase

On the day of the Exam, each character makes two ability checks related to parts of the test:

Glyph of Warding Shapes. Identifying the shapes commonly used when a mage casts a *glyph of warding* requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Common Glyph Effects. Writing an essay on common magical effects and triggers associated with *glyph of warding* spells requires a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

Have each player note their character's Exam results—how many Student Dice they gained and what skills they used during the test—on their copies of the tracking sheet.

Advance to 5th Level!

Each character advances to 5th level at the end of their first Scrivening and Symbology Exam.

ANNA FEHR

Party at the Rose Stage

One evening a short while into the academic year, word begins to spread about a hubbub originating at the Rose Stage on Silverquill's campus. The characters are invited by one of their peers to the after-hours shenanigans happening right now.

Another student is part of this scene—ideally a student the characters have interacted with, or you may choose another student from the "Fellow Students" section in chapter 3.

As twilight falls, a student rushes toward the characters. The student says through their laughter:

> "You've got to see what's going on at the Rose Stage! Someone's cooked up a batch of mascot bait, and now the place is crawling with the little critters! They're as happy as baby boars in mud, so we're going to try a game. It's mascot stacking, and the winner gets a fancy prize!"

The mascot-stacking competition takes place in area R3 of the Rose Stage; see map 3.5 in chapter 3.

Stack 'Em High

When the characters arrive at the Rose Stage, read or paraphrase the following:

> You hear the party before you see it. Laughter, whooping, and shouting waft from the stage as a chaotic scene comes into sight.
>
> On the main Rose Stage, a dozen students playfully dart away from several pests while other mascots watch nearby. The scurrying students hold goopy substances in their hands that look like honey mixed with mushroom pieces. Off to the side, more students stand, laughing and holding curious-looking wands.

A student shouts through uncontrollable giggling:

> "Gross! Look at those goofs, covered in pest bait! I don't know what's in it, but the pests love it. We'll give them their snacks—we were just waiting on you. We knew you'd want in on this mascot-stacking contest! The other mascots want to play, too!"

Once the characters arrive on the scene, the students with the pest bait feed the pests. Twenty mascots occupy the stage, with each campus represented: two art elementals from Prismari, two fractals from Quandrix, two inklings from Silverquill, four spirit statues from Lorehold, and ten pests.

The bait the students concocted for the pests is made from sugary syrup mixed with mushrooms taken from Witherbloom's campus. The students recently discovered it's a harmless snack that keeps pests docile, allowing anyone to play with the normally flighty mascots.

The students standing beside the stage hold wands that are ordinary spellcasting focuses imbued with a limited telekinesis-like effect. When pointed at a mascot within 5 feet, a wand magically lifts the mascot, places it atop another adjacent mascot, and stabilizes the stacked mascots. The mascots might still topple over afterward, but the wands allow the students to stack the mascots without having to physically manipulate them.

In this game, the other mascots jovially participate in the stacking contest. The spirit statues offer to serve as each stack's base. The art elementals, fractals, and inklings gleefully wait to be piled on the stacks while the pests snack away, oblivious to the game.

The Contest

Stacking mascots without the creatures toppling over is a major bragging right, and the characters have the opportunity of earning that now.

Further, Greta Gorunn (chaotic good dwarf **Lorehold apprentice**; see chapter 3) has offered a *belt of dwarvenkind* as the prize for this contest. Her parents sent her the belt as a gift, but she thinks it's more fun to offer the belt as a trophy.

In this contest, up to four teams of two students apiece race to create the highest stack of gathered mascots. At least one team should consist of NPC students, and you should make rolls for them. If the characters have Rivals, two of them form this opposing team. If not, choose students from the "Fellow Students" section in chapter 3.

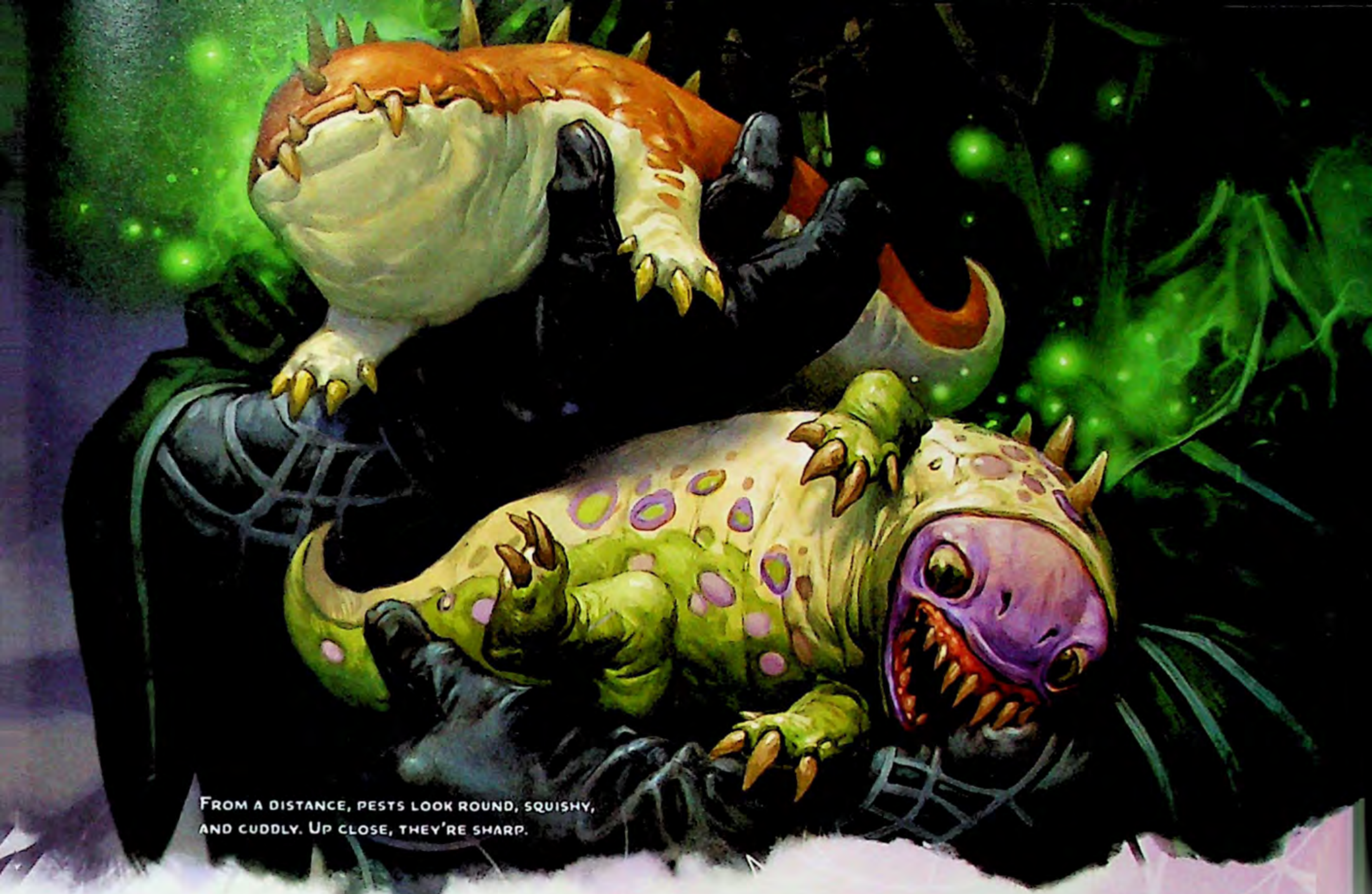
Characters who don't wish to form a team can participate by cheering or heckling, as described below:

Encourage a Team. A character can shout encouragement to a single team. If they do, one member of that team has advantage on their ability check in the stacking game.

Heckle a Team. A character can jeer and rankle a single team. If they do, both members of that team have disadvantage on their ability checks in the game.

Playing the Game

As noted above, each mascot-stacking team has two members, each of whom uses a wand. To determine which team stacks the most mascots, have each member of the team make one ability check of their choice, chosen from the following options: Dexterity (Sleight of Hand), Intelligence (Arcana), or Wisdom (Animal Handling). Record the check totals



From a distance, pests look round, squishy, and cuddly. Up close, they're sharp.

for each team member, then combine them for each team. The team with the highest combined total wins the game.

For example, if one member of a team gets a total of 16 on their Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check to expertly point their wand and the other member gets a total of 20 on their Wisdom (Animal Handling) check to stack the mascots comfortably, their combined total is 36—and they win the game if no other team has a higher total.

If there's a tie, add a tiebreaker round or use your discretion to determine the winner.

Relationship Encounter

During this game, characters might mingle with the other students. If there are students the characters wish to earn Relationship Points with, treat this as a Relationship encounter, as described in the rules found in the "Relationships" section in chapter 3. Have players note the results of this encounter on their tracking sheets.

It's Got Three Heads!

As the winning team is declared, the pests in the mascot stacks suddenly transform into a hostile creature. Read or paraphrase the following:

> The cheering from the students on the Rose Stage suddenly turns to panicked shouts. The normal croaking, chirruping, and screeching of pests turns into guttural groans. The pests amalgamate, their bodies fusing into a multiheaded whole, while the other mascots scatter. The fused creature roars, spewing spittle from one of its heads. Everyone on stage is in danger!

The amalgamated pests move as a single creature in area R3 of the Rose Stage. The creature threatens an opposing team of mascot-stackers, and it uses the stat block of a **chimera**, though it doesn't have a breath weapon. Because it's evening, the lighting in all areas of the Rose Stage is dim. The gathered students and other mascots flee or hide, and it's up to the characters to face this threat.

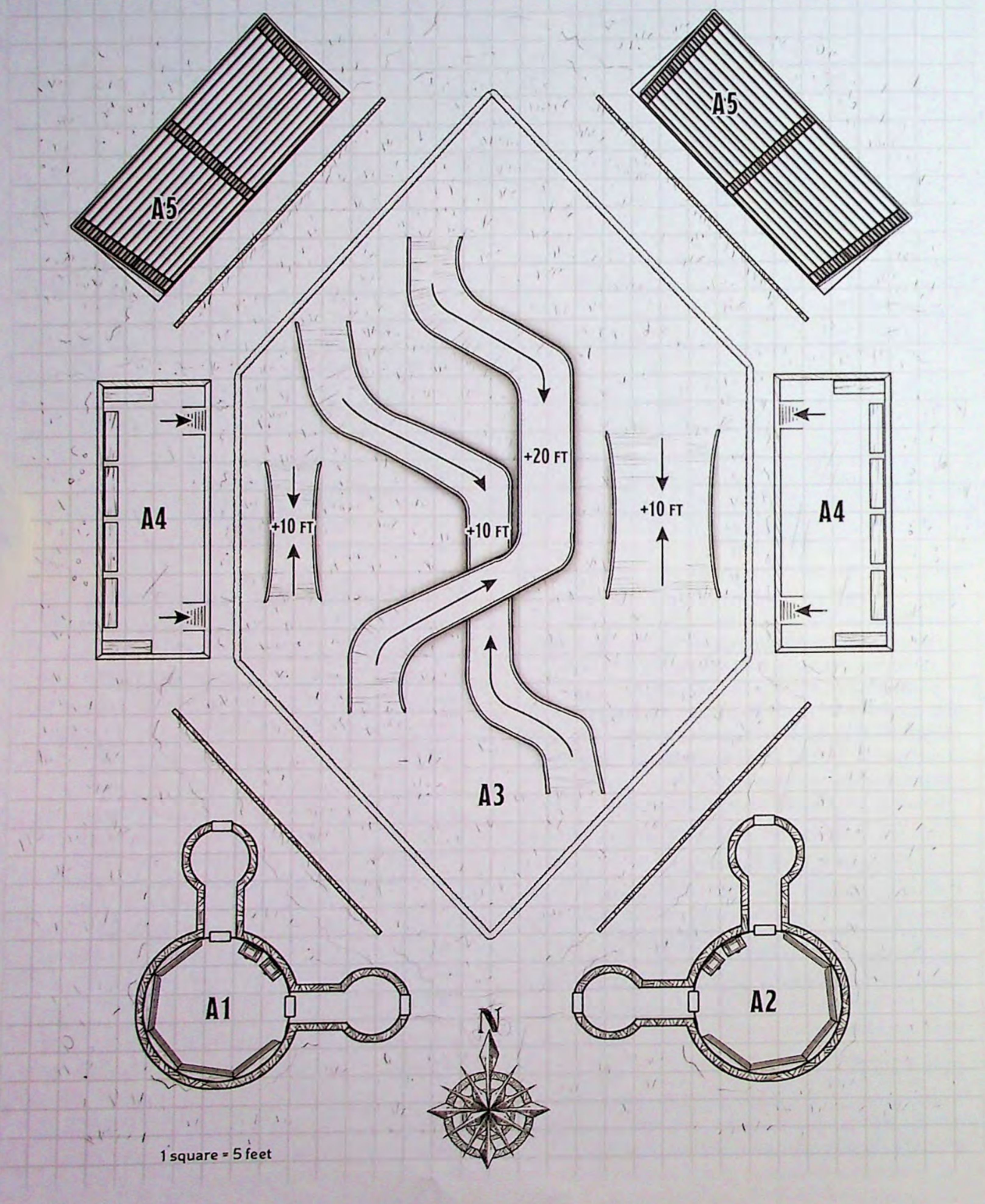
Once the characters reduce the amalgamated creature to 0 hit points, it collapses into its component pests, which look at the characters and blink in confusion. The pests appear unharmed by the event.

Examining the Pests

Pests don't normally amalgamate and turn hostile, then transform back into harmless pests. If the characters examine the pests after the amalgamation is defeated, a successful DC 16 Intelligence

Zoltan Boros

AEROJAUNT FIELD


A5
A5
A4
+10 FT
+10 FT
+20 FT
+10 FT
A4
A3
A1
N
A2
1 square = 5 feet

Map 4.2: Aerojaunt Field

SEAN MACDONALD

(Investigation) check reveals little pools of regurgitated bait on the floor near the pests. Mixed in the pools are small, sharp pieces of same chitin found in area W5 near Wiltroot Hall. The pests ingested this chitin, leading to their strange transformation.

PRACTICE TIME

Once the characters resolve the altercation with the amalgamated mascots, the party on the Rose Stage resumes. Before the characters leave the area, Rosie Wuzfeddlims (chaotic good gnome **Lorehold apprentice**; see chapter 7) approaches them. The gnome announces that Aerojaunt Field is reserved for the characters' Mage Tower team to practice.

The characters' designated practice slot is at the end of this week. As a student referee, Rosie is tasked with helping the characters learn the rules of Mage Tower and the game's basic techniques. Further, as long as the entire party has not made a Rival of Rosie, she promises to gift their team a *stone of good luck* after they practice that can be used at the game later in the year.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Mage Tower practice takes place at Aerojaunt Field. This practice field is on the central campus, and it's available for anyone to use.

When the characters are ready to begin practice, read or paraphrase the following:

> Before you is a carefully maintained dirt field. In the center, an elongated hexagon etched in glowing, magical chalk outlines a series of ramps built into the dirt.
>
> Dugouts face each other on opposite sides of the field. North of the dugouts are bleachers, and south of the dugouts are some outbuildings. Right now, the most prominent feature is a gnome dressed in black-and-white striped shorts and a matching tunic. A knapsack hangs at her side, and a large whistle dangles from her neck. Rosie Wuzfeddlims, one of Strixhaven's student referees, is ready for some serious game time.
>
> "Friends!" she shouts. "Stupendous timing! Oh, this is going to be great!"

During this event, the characters split into two teams and practice moving dummy mascots from one side of the field to another. If there are an uneven number of characters, Rosie joins a team to even the competition.

AEROJAUNT FIELD

Aerojaunt Field was once the university's primary sports field. Now, years after the construction of Strixhaven Stadium, the field sees far less use. Its official purpose is as a dedicated practice field for Strixhaven's high-profile student teams, whose official matches take place in newer facilities elsewhere on campus.

However, less competitive teams hold their matches on this field, most notably the Intramural Silkball Club. The elevated ramps used in silkball matches were permanently built into Aerojaunt Field, whose name evokes a popular silkball move that involves using magic to hop through the air.

AEROJAUNT FIELD LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to the map 4.2. Descriptions assume the characters are using this field during the day. At night, the field is devoid of students.

A1. SOUTHWESTERN OUTBUILDING

> This gray metal storage shed consists of three short silos topped with flat roofs. Weathered wooden doors that were once painted bright yellow lead inside, and a short fence protects the building from impacts from gear sent flying from the field.

The doors to these sheds are locked, but Rosie has the key, as do several faculty members. A character using thieves' tools can open either lock with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check.

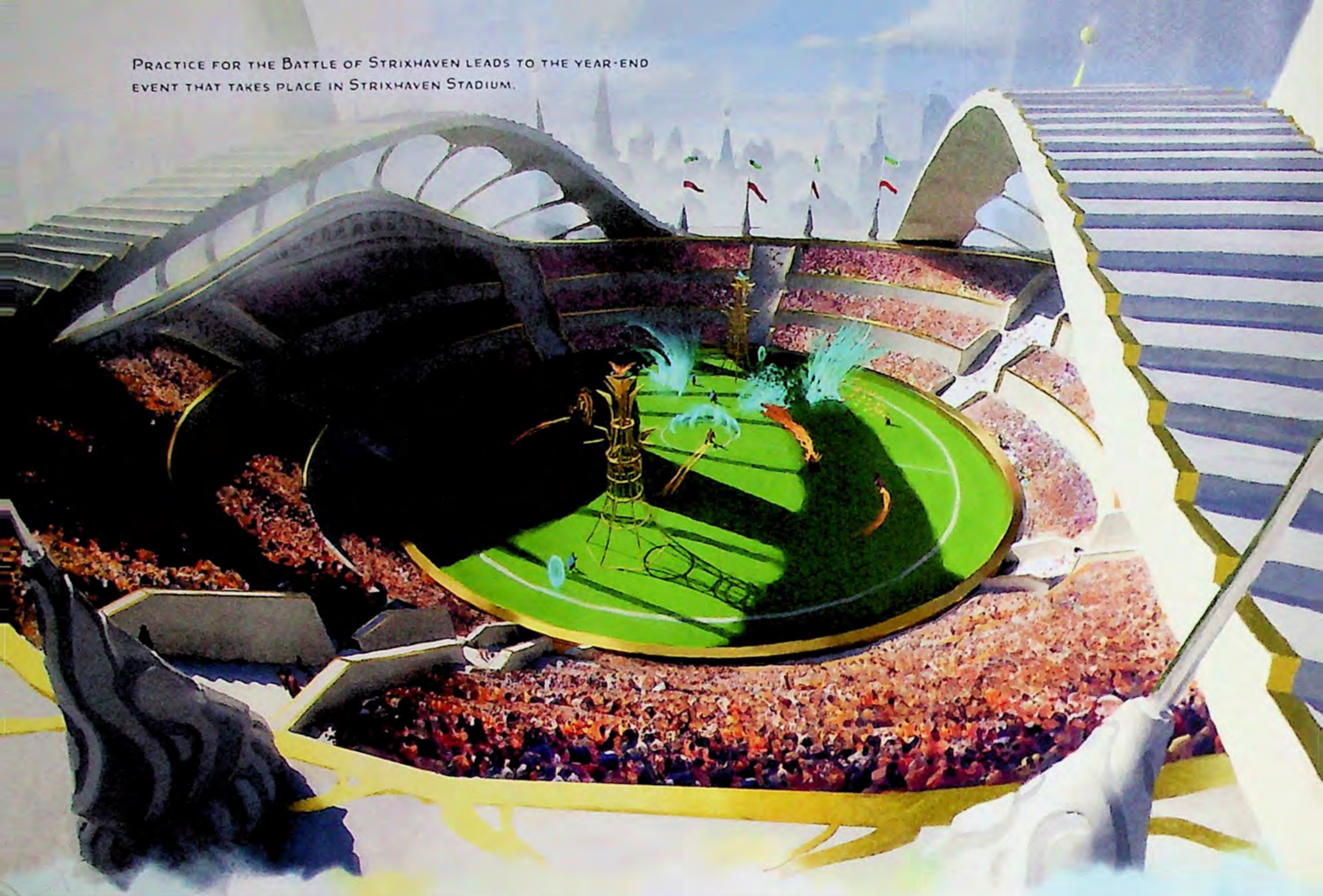
This shed's central silo contains a jumble of obsolete equipment that belongs to the gymnastics club. Old practice horses, balance beams, disassembled high bars, floor mats, and more are shoved against the curved wall.

Treasure. In the main silo's northeast corner are two unlocked chests. Both contain stacks of outdated gymnastics uniforms. However, a *cloak of displacement* lies forgotten at the bottom of one chest. If the characters try to find the cloak's owner, Rosie or any faculty member learns the cloak is unclaimed, so the characters are welcome to keep it.

A2. SOUTHEASTERN OUTBUILDING

The doors to these sheds are locked, but Rosie has a key. A successful DC 25 Dexterity check using thieves' tools opens each lock.

This shed's central silo holds old silkball and Mage Tower equipment: bins of deflated silkballs, wooden dummy mascots, and dented field rakes.



Practice for the Battle of Strixhaven leads to the year-end event that takes place in Strixhaven Stadium.

Treasure. In the main silo's northwest corner are two unlocked chests that both contain stacks of outdated silkball uniforms. However, a *cloak of elvenkind* lies forgotten at the bottom of one chest. If the characters try to find the cloak's owner, Rosie or any faculty member learns the cloak is unclaimed, so the characters are welcome to keep it.

A3. Practice Field

> The hexagonal shape of this old practice field is outlined in glowing magical chalk. Several dirt ramps, each at least ten feet wide, slope and crisscross dizzyingly.

The straight central lengths of each ramp are elevated to the heights indicated on map 4.2.

A4. Dugout

In each dugout, a small vial was accidentally left behind. In the west dugout, the vial contains *oil of slipperiness.* In the east dugout, it's a *potion of climbing.* A character who searches a dugout finds the relevant vial tucked underneath a back bench.

A5. Bleachers

These bleachers rise 30 feet in the air at the back.

Mage Tower Practice

After the characters arrive at the field, Rosie explains that the Mage Tower game the characters are practicing for will take place in nearby Strixhaven Stadium. The stadium doesn't have ramps built into the field. "But practicing with them is fun!" she explains. "Plus, you'll get better at the game! What's not to love?"

During Practice

When the characters are ready to start practice, Rosie retrieves two bright blue wooden dummy mascots from area A2. She explains that the characters need to split into two teams for the purposes of scrimmaging; if there is an odd number of characters, Rosie joins in as a participant.

Once the teams are determined, Rosie assigns each team one of the blue dummy mascots. She then jogs out onto the field (area A3) and places one dummy mascot at the north end of the field and another at the south end. Then she escorts the characters to the center of the ramp elevated to 20 feet

Piotr Dura

(see map 4.2). She explains that the scrimmage will take place over three phases that each last twenty minutes; when she gives the signal, the teams should dash toward the opposing team's mascot, grab it, and try to bring it back to their own team's end of the field to score a point. Participants can use magic or physical means to steal their opponents' mascot and defend their own, but they can't damage any participants, the mascots, the audience, or the facility.

Making Ability Checks. Feel free to narrate or roleplay this encounter however your players find enjoyable. Ultimately, each character makes a single Strength (Athletics), Dexterity (Acrobatics), or Intelligence (Arcana) check, as chosen by the player.

Using Magic. Instead of making an ability check, a character can cast a spell. The level of the spell determines the benefit:

1st or 2nd Level. A character can cast a 1st- or 2nd-level spell to grant another character advantage on their ability check.

3rd Level or Higher. If a character casts a spell of 3rd level or higher, it counts as a successful ability check for the purpose of determining the winner.

Ask the player to describe which spell the character casts and how it helps their team during play. For example, a player might say, "My character uses a *grease* spell to make one of the ramps slippery, causing the other team to slip and fall."

Determining the Winner. The team with the greatest number of successful ability checks wins the scrimmage (ties are possible).

After Practice

Regardless which team wins, Rosie slaps her thigh with glee, declaring that she hasn't had so much fun in ages. She reaches into one of her knapsacks and pulls out a smooth, glowing stone. She says:

> "As promised, here's a gift—think of it as a good luck charm for the upcoming game!"

The stone is a *stone of good luck*, and the characters are welcome to keep it indefinitely.

An Unwelcome Visitor

At the end of practice, after Rosie gives the characters her gift, read or paraphrase the following:

> Without warning, the joyous look on Rosie's face changes into terror. Flinging an arm toward the field's eastern dugout, she stammers wildly.
>
> "Wh- wh- *monster!*" she shouts, then runs for cover.

Emerging from the eastern dugout is a hulking **blue slaad**. The enraged creature fights to the death.

Any character who aced their Magical Physiologies Exam about slaadi (see "Campus Kerfuffle" in chapter 3) receives advantage on attack rolls made against the slaad during this encounter.

Examining the Slaad

If the characters examine the slaad's body, they see superficial claw wounds all over its skin. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Medicine or Perception) check reveals the presence of chipped chitin embedded in these wounds. Characters who notice this chitin can tell that it's the same sort found in area W5 of Wiltroot Hall and on the Rose Stage.

After examining the chitin, a character can make a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) or Wisdom (Insight) check. If the check succeeds, the character logically concludes that one or more chitinous creatures goaded the slaad into attacking. The characters don't yet know the mage hunters' identity or full plans, but they'll soon have a better idea once they realize the sort of creatures hunting them.

Scrivening and Symbology Exam: Symbol Glyphs

The characters' second Exam in Scrivening and Symbology takes place a short while after their practice scrimmage at Aerojaunt Field. Students are tested on their knowledge of scrivening and symbology as expressed in the *symbol* spell.

The multiple choice portion of the Exam focuses on identifying common surfaces used for inscribing *symbol* glyphs. The essay portion then requires students to reason out how best to avoid the effects of a *symbol* spell.

Studying Phase

The day before the Exam, the characters can study the course material. A character can use any ability check and skill during the Studying phase.

Once you've asked each player how their character is approaching the Studying phase, resolve that phase by having each character who studies make a DC 16 ability check. Make sure players keep track of their characters' rerolls and apply them during the Testing phase.

Testing Phase

On the day of the Exam, each character makes two ability checks related to parts of the test:

Symbol Surfaces. Identifying the most suitable surfaces to scribe a *symbol* on requires a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check.

Avoiding Symbol Effects. Writing up the details of common methods to avoid triggering symbols, plus physical and mental techniques for resisting their effects once they have been triggered, requires a successful DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

Have each player note their character's Exam results—how many Student Dice they gained and what skills they used during the test—on their copies of the tracking sheet.

To the Scriptoria Collections

Professor Brenneth Blackstone approaches the characters after he's done proctoring their Exam. Once the other students depart, the professor addresses the characters:

> "Well, students, you've impressed me—or else I wouldn't be asking you this favor.
>
> "I've been guest lecturing in Kollema Hall on Lorehold's campus this term. The administrators love my popular series on scriptology in archaeomancy, but it's eating into my prep time for my classes.
>
> "I need you to track down a tome in the Biblioplex's Scriptoria Collections. It's an ancient treatise on interpreting auguries called *Weale or Woe: An Interpretive Sketch* by Director Arick Quenthorne. Trouble is, no one knows where the book is hiding, and I can't prepare your upcoming Exam without it.
>
> "Find it and bring it to me, and extra credit for the rest of the term is yours!"

Once the characters talk with Blackstone, they're free to go to the Scriptoria Collections. However, Blackstone doesn't need the book for a couple more weeks, so there's no rush to head to the collections.

Map 4.3 shows the Scriptoria Collections. For more about what the characters discover there, see the "Dangerous Knowledge" section.

Getting Some Air

Some time after their second Exam, the characters notice a commotion near Bow's End Tavern in the late afternoon.

Another student is part of this scene, in which the characters are invited to participate in a magical skating contest. Ideally, it's a student the characters have interacted with, or you may choose another student from the "Fellow Students" section in chapter 3.

The characters notice that the front of Bow's End Tavern is oddly deserted, but then they see a familiar face. The student says:

> "Hey, friends! Tulk's drained the retention pool behind the tavern for cleaning tomorrow. For a few hours, we've got a perfectly smooth, empty pool. You know what that means—mage's skate park, baby! Come on, let's see who'll pull the wildest moves and win the prize purse!"

Magical Skate-Off

If the characters follow the student who invited them, that student leads them behind Bow's End Tavern. Read or paraphrase the following:

> Behind the tavern, several groups of students cluster around an empty pool, laughing and waving improvised skates made from wooden planks with wheels affixed to the bottom. The empty pool is made of smooth stone and set about thirty feet into the ground. The tavern's back door is propped open.

One of the characters' peers approaches holding a wand and two skates, thrusting both forward with a grin. They say:

> "We were hoping you'd turn up! See these skates? On their own, pretty difficult to use, right? But check out this training wand from spellcasting class. Someone figured out that a skater can use the wand to help pull off the sweetest tricks. What better way to try it out than a contest?
>
> "There are bets going around, and the crowd is sure to take your side! Want to pull off some wild moves?"

The wand the student is wielding is one of several scattered throughout the crowd. These wands are ordinary spellcasting foci imbued with minor magical effects. Strixhaven's instructors use them to help students practice their wand-wielding skills. These wands can create minor effects such as little puffs of smoke or crackles of energy, but clever spellcasters can use the wands while skating to perform minor jumps and acrobatic tricks on skates.

The Skate-Off

The prize for winning the skate-off is a purse of 250 gp. There are enough skates and wands for all participants. Each character who wants to participate must strap on the rudimentary skates that their peers cobbled together. At least one participant in the skate-off is a student NPC, and you should roll their checks. The participants then skate up and down the sides of the emptied pool, using a combination of skill and momentum to perform jumps and tricks. The wand can compensate for a participant's lack of skill.

Each participant in the skate-off makes a single ability check, choosing one of the following: Strength (Athletics), Dexterity (Acrobatics), or Intelligence (Arcana). Whoever has the highest total wins. If there's a tie, the purse is split between the winners.

Characters who don't participate in the skate-off can encourage or heckle skaters as follows:

Encourage a Skater. A character can shout encouragement at another student who's skating. The student then has advantage on their ability check.

Heckle a Skater. A character can jeer at an opposing skater. The heckled participant has disadvantage on their ability check.

Relationship Encounter

During the skate-off, characters might mingle with the other students. If there are students the characters wish to earn Relationship Points with, treat this as a Relationship encounter, as described in the rules found in the "Relationships" section in chapter 3. Have players note the results of this encounter on their tracking sheets.

Magical shenanigans are common on campus. Students especially love magically getting some air.

Y.W. TANG

That's Not Supposed to Happen!

At the end of the skate-off, after the purse is given to the winner or distributed among multiple winners, one of the wands used during the skate-off accidentally summons a monster. Read or paraphrase the following:

> The crowd roars as the winner is announced. A student waves their wand in celebration, and shockingly, a thunderous clap echoes from it.
>
> Your fellow students quiet in confusion. Suddenly, a creature erupts from the ground, causing nearby students to scream and scatter.
>
> "That rock thing!" the student shouts. "It's heading into the tavern!"

The wand has summoned an angry and confused **galeb duhr**.

At the start of combat, the characters are outside the tavern's back exit (the western portion of area E5 on map 3.3 in chapter 3). Suddenly, a creature erupts from the ground, causing nearby students to scream and scatter. The galeb duhr fights the characters until reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, when it tries to flee.

Examining the Scene

Examining the wand the student used to accidentally summon the galeb duhr reveals that it's different in weight and texture than the other wands.

A successful DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the wand is a summoning device, albeit a strange one intended to work only once. Further, a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals slimy remnants stuck into the wand's grooves, while a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Nature) check reveals that the slimy substance is algae from Witherbloom's campus.

PRECISION IS KEY. SAYING "BOOKS ON MAGE HUNTERS" ISN'T THE SAME AS SAYING "BOOKS ABOUT MAGE HUNTERS."

ZOLTAN BOROS

DANGEROUS KNOWLEDGE

When the characters are ready to search for the tome Professor Blackstone needs—or if they're eager to investigate the strange occurrences they've experienced recently—they can head to the Scriptoria Collections.

The Scriptoria Collections lie below the main level of the Biblioplex. The reference librarian (area B4 on map 3.1 in chapter 3) can point them in the right direction, as can a faculty member or student.

Characters can ask anyone in the Biblioplex, including the librarians, about the title Professor Blackstone mentioned—*Weale or Woe: An Interpretive Sketch.* The librarians confirm that the book is located in the Scriptoria Collections, but they're unsure exactly how it was cataloged, so the characters need to track it down. If the characters ask the librarians or anyone else about strange chitinous creatures (if you're running this as a standalone) or the magical signature they've found all over campus (if you're running this as a campaign), no one knows anything about either subject.

SCRIPTORIA COLLECTIONS

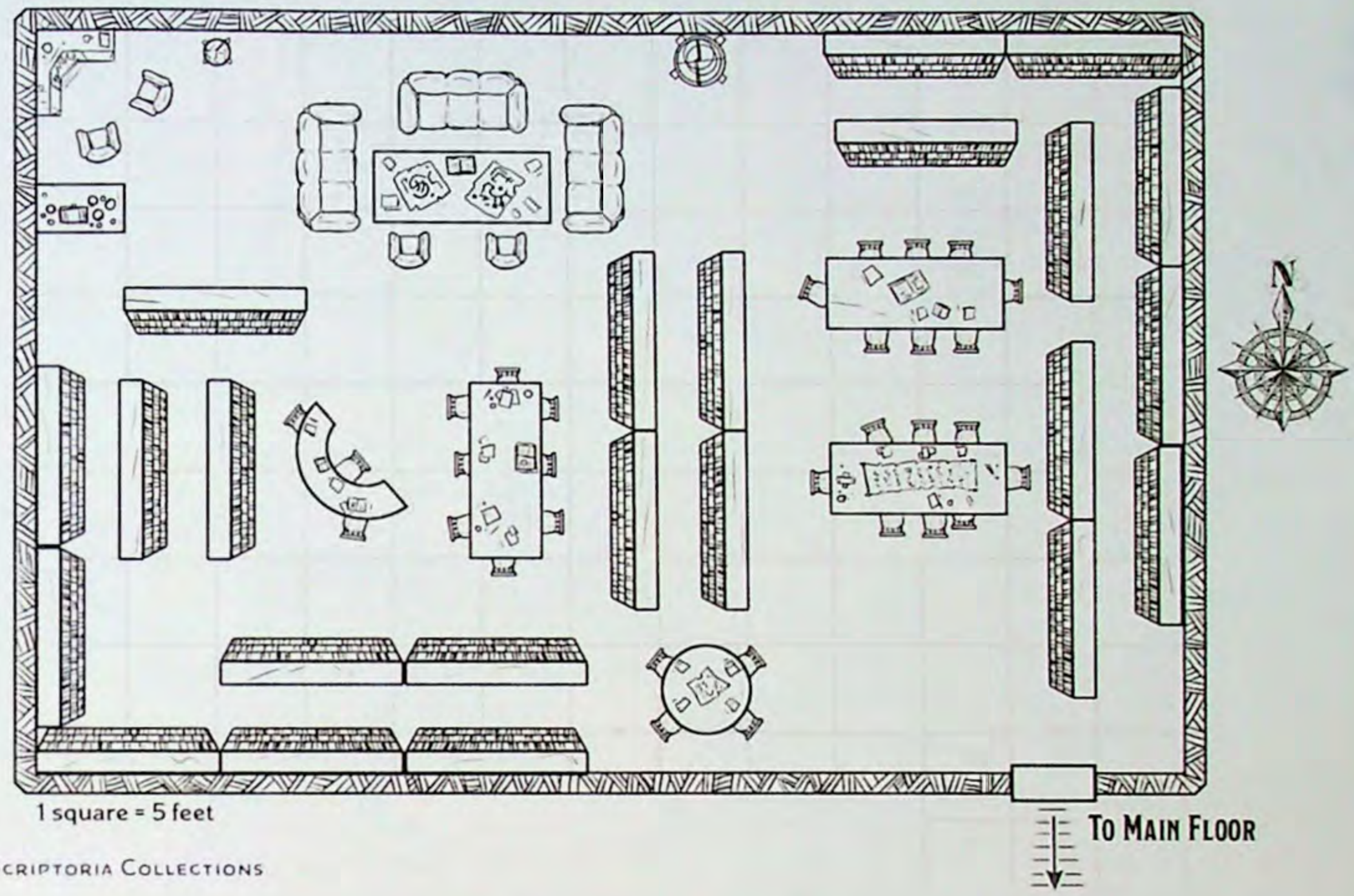
When the characters head down the stairs to the Scriptoria Collections, read or paraphrase the following:

> As you make your way down the winding staircase, the passage's gloom gives way to a warm light. The room before you is spacious and comfortable, with gleaming bookcases, wide tables, luxurious chairs, an inviting lounge, and a hearth. Oil paintings of breathtaking landscapes and heroic spellcasters line the walls, and antique spherical astrolabes are proudly displayed along the northern wall.

This spacious room below the main floor of the Biblioplex was built two centuries ago, long after the construction of the main library. The great elven scholar and Strixhaven alumnus Arick Quenthorne donated the collection's initial materials. He went on to become a powerful director at Strixhaven.

Director Quenthorne was a leading occult scholar who specialized in studying the esoteric power inherent in physical objects, especially written words and symbols. Later in his career, Quenthorne shifted his interest to the evolution of magical creatures, especially those associated with spellcasters, so the records contain a dazzling assortment of information.

SCRIPTORIA COLLECTIONS



MAP 4.3: SCRIPTORIA COLLECTIONS

SCRIPTORIA COLLECTIONS FEATURES

The room has the following features:

Astrolabes. These spherical copper devices were a gift to Director Quenthorne from a society of diviners. Most are situated along the northern wall in the middle and to the west, near the hearth. Magically enchanted to help the director see into other worlds and beyond, the centermost astrolabe has been corrupted as described in the "Is That Astrolabe Breathing?" section. If any character examines this central astrolabe for 1 round or more, skip directly to that section.

Bookshelves. The sturdy bookshelves here are bolted in place. Climbing a bookshelf requires a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check.

Ceiling. The ceiling is 30 feet high.

Door. Only one door leads in and out of the collections. It's unlocked during the day while the Biblioplex is open. At night, the door is closed, locked, and further sealed with an *arcane lock* spell. A character using thieves' tools can open the door with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check (DC 35 while the *arcane lock* spell is in effect).

Hearth. The hearth in the northwest corner of the room is decorated with antique diviner's tools. Two comfortable chairs flank it in front of a smaller spherical astrolabe to the east and a table to the south that is covered in knickknacks and artifacts from Strixhaven's earlier days.

SEAN MACDONALD

Lounge. The lounge to the northwest includes several plush sofas and comfortable chairs, along with a heavy table covered in tomes and sheets of parchment left by a previous study group. The sharp letter openers on the table can be used as silvered daggers in a fight.

Tables and Chairs. The room's chairs can be moved, but its sturdy tables are bolted to the floor.

SEEKING THE PROFESSOR'S TOME

To find *Weale or Woe: An Interpretive Sketch* for Professor Blackstone or any other text in the room, the characters must take time to search the bookshelves. A character who searches the bookshelves for 1 hour can, at the end of that time, make a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check, finding whatever book they seek on a success.

MAGE HUNTERS

Among the other books in the collection is a tome about magical creatures, penned by Arick Quenthorne himself. Any character who spends at least 10 minutes studying this tome learns that during his time as an administrator, Director Quenthorne discovered creatures lurking off campus called mage hunters. The tome provides sketches of chitinous plates matching those the characters found.

The tome states that pairs of mage hunters break with their allies to hunt specific individuals who catch their attention. With this information, the characters should realize that a pair of mage hunters is after them.

QUENTHORNE'S HISTORY

A character who spends at least 10 minutes studying either of Director Quenthorne's tomes discovers information that sheds some light on the current situation. Director Quenthorne wrote about a student who practiced bizarre magic while attending Strixhaven during Quenthorne's tenure as an administrator 200 years ago. This student used magic to siphon energy and life from creatures. The tome describes the strange magic's lingering aura, which is identical to the magic the characters have observed. This student was censured repeatedly for breaking the university's bylaws and was expelled. The tome states that the student left and never returned to campus. The name of the student is blacked out or illegible in all mentions. Attempts at restoring the name (magical or otherwise) are ineffective.

IS THAT ASTROLABE BREATHING?

After the characters find the tome for Professor Blackstone and gather any information they wish, or if they closely examine the central astrolabe, the astrolabe reveals itself to be a monster.

The mage hunters stalking the characters stumbled across this creature on the outskirts of campus. After imbibing *potions of invisibility* and feeding one to the creature to sneak it into the Scriptoria Collections, they told it to ambush the characters.

Read or paraphrase the following:

> A groan echoes throughout the quiet room, like metal grinding upon metal. You spot movement from the largest astrolabe along the north wall, as the device's overlapping copper rings become lashing, barbed tentacles!

The astrolabe uses the stat block of a **grick alpha**, except it doesn't have a beak attack. The creature was waiting for an opportune time to attack the characters as instructed. The creature fights until reduced to 10 hit points or fewer, when it tries to lumber up the stairs and run away.

EXAMINING THE SCENE

Once the creature is dealt with, the characters can examine it for more information. A successful DC 16 Wisdom (Perception or Survival) check reveals the presence of chipped chitin embedded in claw wounds on the creature. Characters who notice this realize it's the same material they found near Wiltroot Hall and on the Rose Stage. They can also conclude that the mage hunters subdued this creature before forcing it to ambush the characters.

DELIVERING THE PROFESSOR'S TOME

So long as the characters deliver *Weale or Woe: An Interpretive Sketch* to Professor Blackstone before the third Exam, he lights up with relief. "Oh, the time you've saved me!" Professor Blackstone exclaims. "Thank you, students. I won't forget this—as promised, extra credit on the next exam is yours!"

SCRIVENING AND SYMBOLOGY EXAM: AUGURY

The characters' third Exam in Scrivening and Symbology takes place a couple of weeks after the incidents in the Scriptoria Collections. It tests students on their knowledge of divining strategies and techniques tied to the *augury* spell, as well as methods of interpreting the spell's opaque results.

STUDYING PHASE

The day before the Exam, the characters can study the course material. A character can use any ability check and skill during the Studying phase.

Once you've asked each player how their character is approaching the Studying phase, resolve that phase by having each character who studies make a DC 17 ability check. Make sure players keep track of their characters' rerolls and apply them during the Testing phase.

TESTING PHASE

On the day of the Exam, each character makes two ability checks related to parts of the test:

Augury Tools and Methods. Choosing the most effective tools and methods for casting *augury* requires a successful DC 17 Intelligence (History) check.

Interpreting Weals and Woes. Reasoning out meaningful interpretations of cryptic scenarios paired with the results of auguries requires a successful DC 17 Wisdom (Insight) check.

Have each player note their character's Exam results—how many Student Dice they gained and what skills they used during the test—on their copies of the tracking sheet.

If the characters gave *Weale or Woe: An Interpretive Sketch* to Professor Blackstone before the Exam, their Exam results are adjusted as follows:

- If they failed the Exam, they pass instead.
- If they passed the Exam, they ace it instead.
- If they aced the Exam, they receive three Student Dice, instead of two.

SOME STUDENTS LIVE FOR PERFORMING AND BURST INTO SONG.

STEVE ARGYLE

TELL US IN SONG!

The next time the characters are in the Biblioplex, they're challenged to a sing-off. Another student is part of this scene—ideally a student the characters have interacted with, or you may choose another student from the "Fellow Students" section in chapter 3. Read or paraphrase the following:

> You hear enthusiastic chanting and clapping. In the library's main area, students ring the eastern group of tables. Standing on them are familiar faces, who look like they're about to burst into song.

One of the characters' peers rushes from the study area and calls out to the characters:

> "That's the other Mage Tower team! They're trying to steal your fans!"

The opposing Mage Tower team challenges the characters to a singing contest to win over the student body. This event takes place in the easternmost portion of area B8 (see map 3.1 in chapter 3). Though rowdiness isn't allowed in the library, the librarians are fascinated by the challenge and want to see how the characters handle this situation.

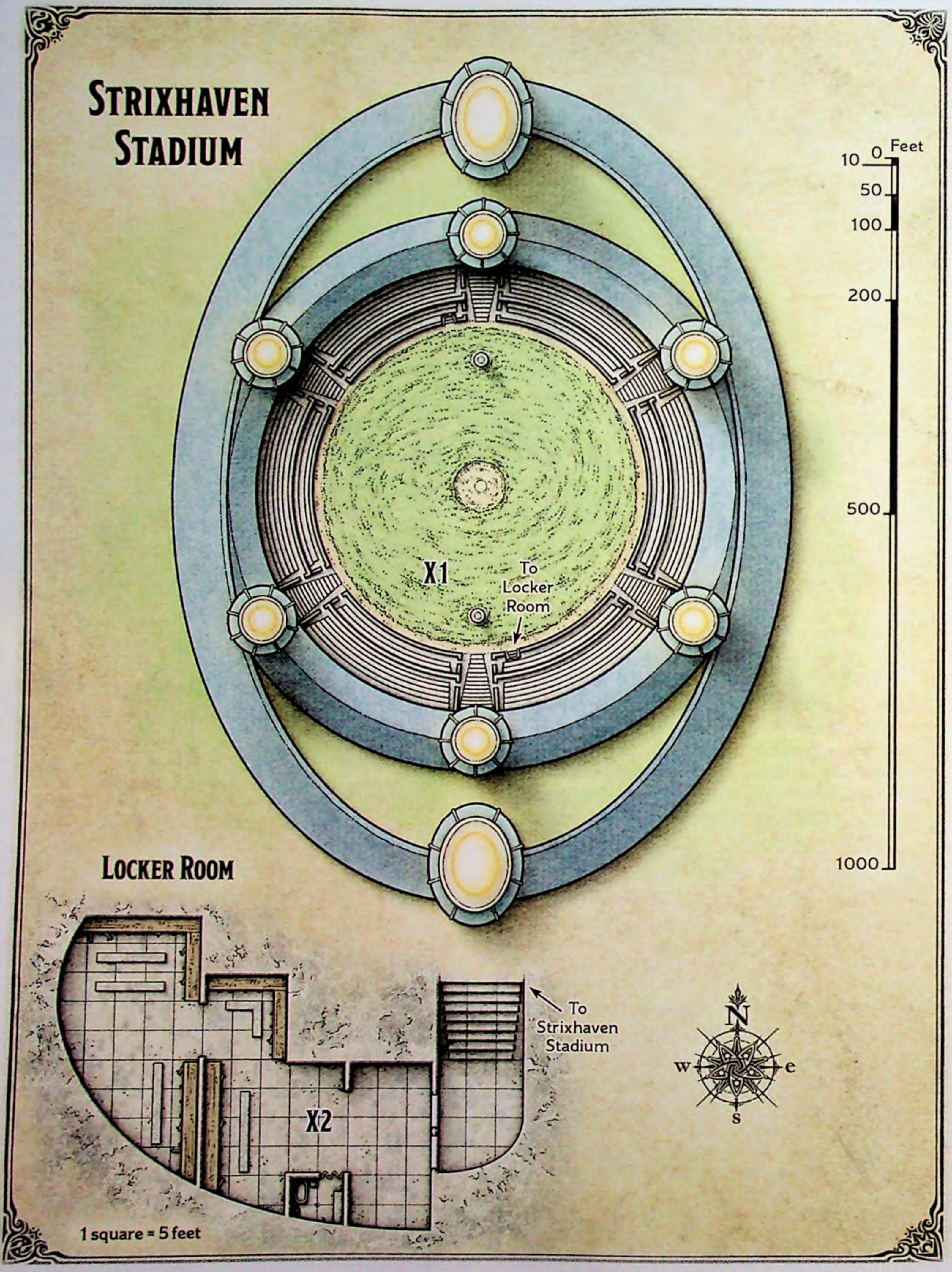
THE OPPOSING TEAM

The opposing team has as many members are there are player characters. If the characters have Rivals, those students are members of the opposing team. Choose the rest of the opposing team's members from the "Fellow Students" section in chapter 3 or create new students of your own to round out the team.

IT'S A SING-OFF!

When the characters approach the study area where the opposing Mage Tower team waits, a student from the opposing team claps sardonically and challenges them.

> "Oh, look, everyone—if it isn't the big kids on campus. They think they're going to wipe the floor with us at the Battle of Strixhaven, don't they? Well, we've got something to say about that!
>
> "We challenge you to a sing-off! We'll crush you in song before we crush you on the field!"


Strixhaven Stadium
Feet
10
0
50
100
200
500
1000
X1
To Locker Room
Locker Room
To Strixhaven Stadium
X2
N
W
e
S
1 square = 5 feet

Map 4.4: Strixhaven Stadium

MIKE SCHLEY

If the characters participate in the sing-off, they'll gain an edge during the Battle of Strixhaven; see the "Determining the Winner" section below.

The Sing-Off

The sing-off takes place in two phases.

Phase 1. During the first phase, the opposing team creates a group performance centered around a song. Depending on the students involved, at least one NPC sings while the others beatbox, hum harmonies, drum on tables, clap books together, tumble or dance, or perform other accompaniment. The audience is wowed at their smack-talking!

Phase 2. During the second phase, the characters are in the spotlight, and they need to create a killer performance to win back the crowd. At least one character must sing, rap, chant, or otherwise vocalize lyrics. Doing so in a crowd-pleasing way requires a successful DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check.

The other characters can assist the performance. They can use any skill so long as it makes sense in the context of the sing-off. A character might bench press a huge stack of books to the song's beat while lying on a table, making a Strength (Athletics) check. Or a character might leap about gymnastically in time to the song, making a Dexterity (Acrobatics) check.

Determining the Winner

If at least two characters' ability checks during the competition succeed, the characters win this sing-off and humble their opponents. If the characters win, they each gain advantage on one ability check of their choice made during the Mage Tower game at the upcoming Battle of Strixhaven.

The Crowd Scatters

Once this event is resolved, the reference librarians shoo the students away, reminding them of the standing edict to avoid tomfoolery in the Biblioplex.

Relationship Encounter

During the sing-off, characters might mingle with the other students. If there are students the characters wish to earn Relationship Points with, treat this as a Relationship encounter, as described in the rules found in the "Relationships" section in chapter 3. Have players note the results of this encounter on their tracking sheets.

Battle of Strixhaven

Before the day of the Battle of Strixhaven dawns, allow the players plenty of time to tie up any loose ends their characters currently have on campus. If they haven't chosen a mascot to play the Mage Tower game with, prompt them to do so now. They need to choose whether they're playing the game with an art elemental from Prismari, a fractal from Quandrix, an inkling from Silverquill, a pest from Witherbloom, or a spirit statue from Lorehold. The characters need to bring the mascot with them when they report to Strixhaven Stadium for the game.

This event is the climax of this adventure. Once you're ready to begin, read the following:

> The last day of the term has finally arrived, and it's time for you to crush your opponents at Mage Tower or face ignominious defeat. You've prepared all year for this—the Battle of Strixhaven is upon you!
>
> Gathering your gear, you hustle toward Strixhaven Stadium. Time to show everyone what you're made of!

When the characters are ready, usher them into their locker room with their chosen mascot to prepare for the game.

Regardless of the results, the characters are expected to play the game and then return to the locker room afterward to await a visit from Professor Sharpbeak, who's officiating. Remind them that Professor Sharpbeak promised to grant each of the winners half of their tuition for this term. Effectively, the characters will receive 400 gp apiece if they win the game. Even if they don't win, they're expected to return to the locker room in a show of good sportsmanship.

Strixhaven Stadium Locations

Built less than a century ago, Strixhaven Stadium is a monument to the status and legacy of the university. Important games of Mage Tower are played here, including the famous Battle of Strixhaven. The battle takes place only every three years, so the characters can experience it only once.

The following locations are keyed to map 4.4.

X1. Strixhaven Field

> Strixhaven Stadium is enormous. The circular, bright-green field is covered with small hills, and forty-foot towers rise up at either end of the field. The surrounding bleachers stretch fifty feet into the air. Five spires each fly the flag of a Strixhaven colleges, and a sixth flies a banner displaying the Strixhaven star.

The entire field is difficult terrain owing to the hills built into the playing field. (This encourages flying and other magical means of transportation as the teams each try to ferry their opponents' mascot back to their own end of the field.) The bleachers are filled with hundreds of students and teachers.

X2. Locker Room

When the characters arrive for the Battle of Strixhaven, they must head to their locker room to dress and wait for the game to begin.

There are two stadium locker rooms: one at the north end of the field and another at the south end. The characters are assigned to the southernmost locker room, while their opponents are assigned the northernmost one. Lockers line each room, as do racks of uniforms and field equipment.

Before the Battle

Before the game, both teams and their mascots are expected to stay in their respective locker rooms. They must wait until they're called onto the field before they can level sarcastic comments at members of the opposing team. Feel free to roleplay this situation as appropriate. However, if the mood turns hostile, interrupt it with the start of the game.

The Battle Begins

When it's time for the game to begin, the magically enhanced voice of Professor Sharpbeak overwhelms all conversation, even flooding into the locker rooms.

> "Students and teachers. Staff and friends. Welcome to the Battle of Strixhaven! Today, two teams of Strixhaven's finest will battle for the right to call themselves champions. They've practiced and you've waited—now, let the game begin!"

Once the announcement ends, the teams are required to move from the locker rooms onto the main field. When both teams meet Professor Sharpbeak at the center of the field, Professor Sharpbeak snags the characters' mascot, flies it to the southern end of the field, and places it there. She then flies the opposing team's mascot to the field's north end.

Returning to the center of the field, she reminds the teams that magic is allowed, but harming other participants, the mascots, the audience, and the facility is not. After a breathless pause, she then blows her whistle. The game is on!

Resolving the Battle

The game takes place over three phases. In each phase, you should make ability checks for the student NPCs on the opposing team.

Phase 1

Each participant must make a DC 16 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to dash past opposing team members and grab their mascot, and a DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check to anticipate the opposing team's tactical ploys.

Phase 2

Each participant must make a DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check to not be faked out by the opposing team's spells or mock spells, and a DC 16 Charisma (Deception) check to fake out their opponents with spells or mock spells of their own.

Phase 3

Each participant must make a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check to catch a stealthy opponent trying to sneak off with their mascot, and a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check to wrest their mascot away from the opponents.

Using Magic

Instead of making an ability check, a character can cast a spell. The level of the spell determines the benefit:

1st or 2nd Level. Casting a 1st- or 2nd-level spell gives another team member of the character's choice advantage on their next ability check made during the game.

3rd Level or Higher. Casting a spell of 3rd level or higher counts as a successful ability check for the purpose of determining the winning team.

Deciding the Winner

The team with the highest total of successful ability checks wins the Battle of Strixhaven.

THE BATTLE OF STRIXHAVEN IS AMONG THE MOST STORIED EVENTS ON CAMPUS. GAMES ARE OFTEN TALKED ABOUT FOR YEARS AFTER THEY'RE PLAYED.

BRYAN SOLA

RETURNING TO THE LOCKER ROOM

When the characters return to their locker room, allow some roleplaying banter to take place.

Without warning, two **mage hunters** (see chapter 7) emerge from hiding places in the locker room and attack. The mage hunters entered the locker room unnoticed during the Mage Tower game and have been lying in wait for the characters to return.

Professor Sharpbeak is nowhere in sight, and it's up to the characters to save themselves. The mage hunters fight to the death.

Stuck in technical conversations on the field, Professor Sharpbeak doesn't return until the altercation with the mage hunters is over.

EXAMINING THE MAGE HUNTERS

Examining the mage hunters reveals that these are the creatures that have been stalking the characters throughout this academic year. Their chitin matches the type the characters found near Wiltroot Hall, the Rose Stage, Aerojaunt Field, and the Scriptoria Collections. Characters who read the tome in the Scriptoria Collections, which mentioned that mage hunters work in pairs, should feel reassured that the threat has ended on Strixhaven's campus.

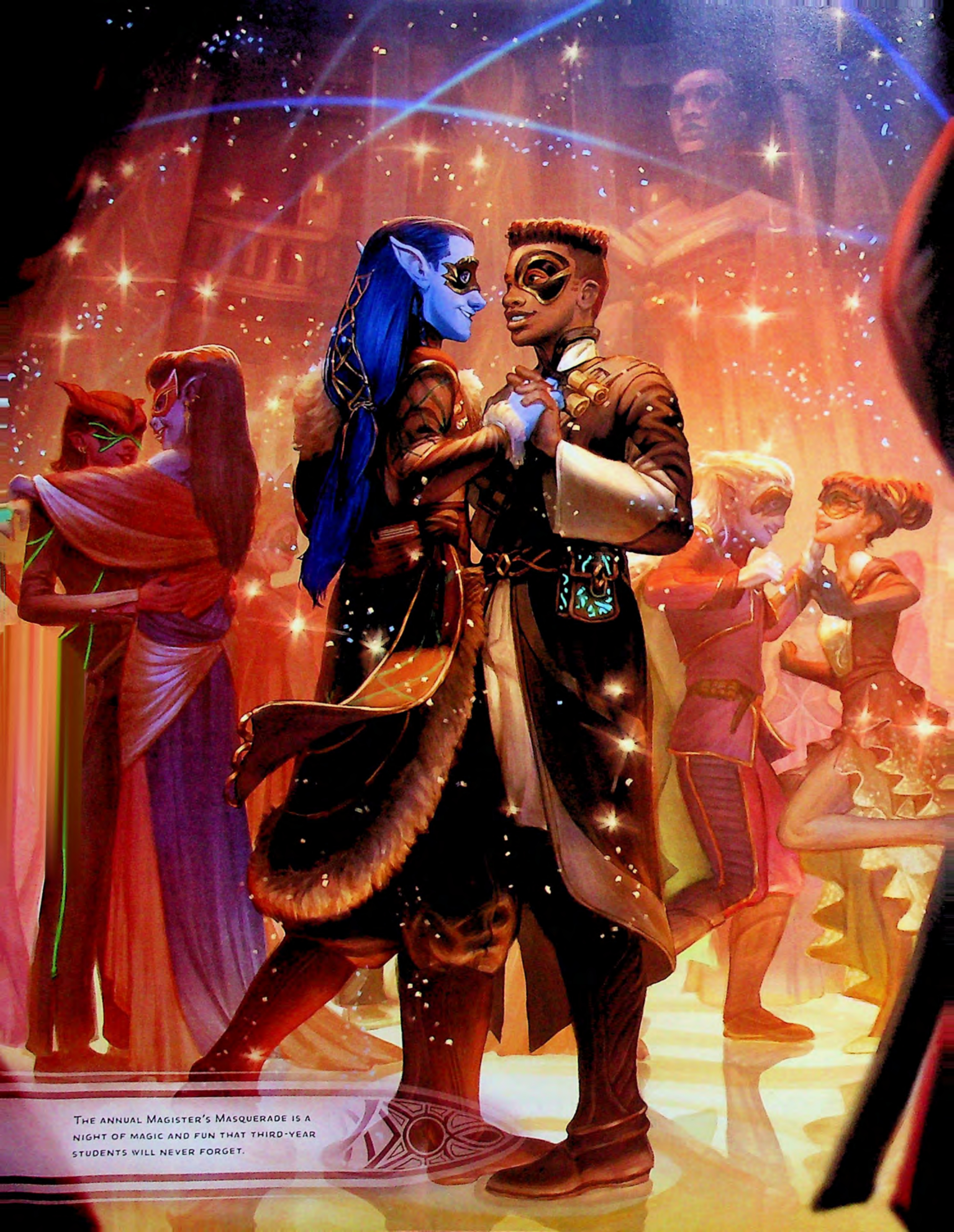
END OF THE YEAR

Once word gets out about what happened in the locker room, the characters are celebrated as heroes on campus. Feel free to add roleplaying scenes that reinforce how the characters' actions kept calamity away from Strixhaven.

If you're running this adventure as part of a Strixhaven campaign, the characters move toward their third year at Strixhaven as admired students on campus. They haven't yet learned Murgaxor's identity or what his ultimate plan is, but that information will surface soon enough. For now, the students can bask in their achievements, even as they look toward adventures to come.

ADVANCE TO 6TH LEVEL!

Each character advances to 6th level at the end of this adventure.



The annual Magister's Masquerade is a night of magic and fun that third-year students will never forget.

CHAPTER 5

THE MAGISTER'S MASQUERADE

As the characters' third year at Strixhaven dawns, their legacies are beginning to solidify. They made it through their second year of studies, and their heroics have earned them reputations as some of the most remarkable student-mages on campus.

In this adventure, the characters are invited to the Magister's Masquerade, one of the most elaborate annual events on campus. Before the big dance, though, they'll clash with rivals, pick the perfect masquerade outfit, and help prepare for one of the most glamorous nights of their lives. During this time, an influential faculty member begins to act strangely, and a menacing shadow falls over all of Strixhaven.

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

Here's what you need to know to run the adventure in this chapter, whether you're running it as part of a campaign or as a standalone adventure.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

Recently, Murgaxor found his opportunity to wreak new havoc on Strixhaven University. During an archaeological expedition in the Fortress Badlands, Dean Augusta Tullus of Lorehold College unearthed a curious orb. Unknown to her, this orb allows Murgaxor to influence her to fulfill his plan to drain the life from Strixhaven's students.

A STANDALONE ADVENTURE

If you're running this chapter's adventure as a standalone, Murgaxor is long dead, defeated in his first attempt to murder hundreds of students and use their life energy to achieve immortality. However, his spirit lingers in *Murgaxor's orb*, allowing him a chance to sow his revenge.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

This adventure assumes the characters are 6th level when it begins. The Third-Year Level Advancement table summarizes when the characters gain levels during the adventure.

THIRD-YEAR LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

Level	Reached When Characters ...
7th	Quell the panicked students as they prepare for the Magister's Masquerade
8th	Finish the adventure

CAROLINE GARIBA

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Use the Third-Year Encounters table for random encounters on campus during this adventure.

THIRD-YEAR ENCOUNTERS

d10	Encounter
1–3	2d4 **pest mascots** (see chapter 7) making off with a student's ball gown
4–5	1d4 **Lorehold apprentices** (see chapter 7) affected by an *Otto's irresistible dance* spell
6–7	1d6 **inkling mascots** (see chapter 7) on a mission to mar a student's outfit for the Magister's Masquerade
8–9	1d4 bolts of shimmering, animate fabric (use the **rug of smothering** stat block for each bolt) that clearly don't want to be turned into clothes
10	1 **cloaker** disguised as part of a student's outfit for the Magister's Masquerade

STUDENT SCHEDULES

Before starting this adventure, have the players choose at least three courses their characters are taking this year, either by coming up with the courses themselves or by rolling on the Third-Year Courses table. Inform them that the characters are also enrolled in a required course, Advanced Arcane History.

THIRD-YEAR COURSES

d10	Course	Offered By
1	Advanced Abstraction	Quandrix
2	Aquatic Cryptozoology	Witherbloom
3	Ethics in Enchantment	Silverquill
4	Extradimensional Architecture	Quandrix
5	History of Magic Rings	Lorehold
6	Introductory Aesthemancy	Prismari
7	Overview of Magical Notation	Silverquill
8	Advanced Arcano-mycology	Witherbloom
9	Principles of Warsinging	Lorehold
10	Turning Inner Fire into Outer Flames	Prismari

Mysterious Magic

Many of the strange events that occur in this chapter are a result of Murgaxor Grenshel manipulating Dean Tullus using a mysterious orb. This device, *Murgaxor's orb* (see below), remains in the dean's possession throughout the adventure and allows her to spread the curse that afflicts Strixhaven's students. The adventure tells you when cursed students behave strangely during relevant events, so don't worry about tracking which Strixhaven students are cursed.

Murgaxor's Orb

Wondrous Item, Legendary (Requires Attunement)

Roiling green mist fills this glass orb, which the exiled Strixhaven mage Murgaxor once used in foul magical experiments. Murgaxor's spirit has infused the orb, which he uses to spread a terrible curse among Strixhaven's students.

Sentience. *Murgaxor's orb* is a sentient, chaotic evil magic item with the following properties:

- The orb has an Intelligence of 20, a Wisdom of 16, and a Charisma of 16, as well as hearing and darkvision out to a range of 30 feet.
- The orb can speak, read, and understand Common, and it can communicate telepathically with any creature touching it.
- At any time during your turn, the orb can cast the *suggestion* spell (save DC 17), targeting you or one other creature that touched the orb within the last 24 hours. This isn't a power of the orb that you control.

Curse. Any Humanoid you touch while holding the orb must succeed on a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw or become cursed. Each creature cursed by the orb bears an echo of Murgaxor's hateful thoughts, and that creature suffers from headaches that are persistent but not debilitating until the curse ends. On your turn, the orb can use an action to produce one of the following effects, targeting one or more creatures it has cursed:

Unconsciousness. The cursed creature falls unconscious for 1 hour. The creature is roused if it takes damage or someone uses an action to shake or slap it awake.

Visions of Terror. The cursed creature sees terrifying visions, causing it to view all creatures that aren't also cursed as dangerous monsters for 10 minutes. The cursed creature must use its action each round to make one attack against the nearest non-cursed creature. If the cursed creature has multiple possible targets, it attacks one at random. This effect ends if the cursed creature is incapacitated.

After either of these effects ends, the affected creature is no longer cursed. The curse can also be removed from a creature with a *remove curse* spell or similar magic. All cases of the curse end if *Murgaxor's orb* is destroyed.

Magical Signature. As a side effect of the orb's curse, the spell *detect magic* reveals an aura of enchantment surrounding creatures bearing the curse. This aura is distinctive, but in a way *detect magic* offers no further details about.

Destroying the Orb. *Murgaxor's orb* has AC 18; 20 hit points; immunity to necrotic, poison, and psychic damage; and resistance to all other types of damage. If reduced to 0 hit points, the orb shatters.

Cordially Invited

Once the characters have decided how they've spent their time away from school and chosen their courses for the year, read the following text:

> Classes haven't even started at Strixhaven yet, but excitement and magic are already in the air on campus. Amid the bustle of students reuniting after their time away and preparing for the new year, you find your new lodgings. Inside the small, clean room is a bed, a closet, and a desk, and on the desktop is a thick piece of vellum, carefully rolled, sealed, and bearing your name. Nestled next to it is a silver pin shaped like the Strixhaven star, the symbol of the university.

Characters who examine the sealed message on their desk find it easy to open. Show players the Masquerade Invitation as characters open the letter.

The Magister's Masquerade

The Magister's Masquerade is an elaborate dress ball and a major campus event. All third-year students are invited and expected to attend. Invitees may invite fourth-year companions to the event, but first- and second-year students aren't permitted.

A note provided along with the invitation explains the expectations for the event and the accompanying pin:

- The Magister's Masquerade dress code requires attendees to come in formal costumes with masks. Costumes can take a wide variety of forms, but they can't suggest any specific college affiliation. Otherwise, style, creativity, and magical flair are encouraged.
- The pin is a magic item called a *masque charm*. Its magic can help students dress for the Magister's Masquerade.

- *Masque charms* are only for use during the Magister's Masquerade. Students caught wearing a *masque charm* or using its magic outside the event are withdrawn from any Extracurriculars for the rest of the academic year.
- All third-year students must assist the event's organizing committee.
- Students will learn more about the masquerade and the organizing committee tonight at a reception at Bow's End Tavern.

Characters who succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence (History) check know more about the background of the Magister's Masquerade, as described in the "Masquerade History" section.

Masque Charm

Wondrous Item, Common

A *masque charm* is a small silver pin. While wearing this charm, you can use an action to cast the *disguise self* spell (DC 13 to discern the disguise). Once the spell is cast, it can't be cast from the charm again until the next sunset. When casting the spell, you can have the spell last for its normal 1 hour duration or for 6 hours. If you choose the 6-hour duration, the charm becomes nonmagical when the spell ends. In either case, the spell ends if the charm is removed from you.

Masquerade History

The founding masters of Strixhaven University sought ways to mitigate the clashes common among students of different magical colleges. Magister Kollema of Lorehold College recognized that shared experiences and culture created more unity than merely attending the same classes. In light of this, he proposed the first Magister's Masquerade, which would rely on students from all five colleges to prepare every aspect of the event and would require students to attend in costume, divesting themselves of any college loyalty. The first event was a grand success, and since then the Magister's Masquerade has been an annual tradition at Strixhaven. It's a night of magic and mystery that highlights what students can accomplish together and allows them to see one another in a different light.

Reception at Bow's End

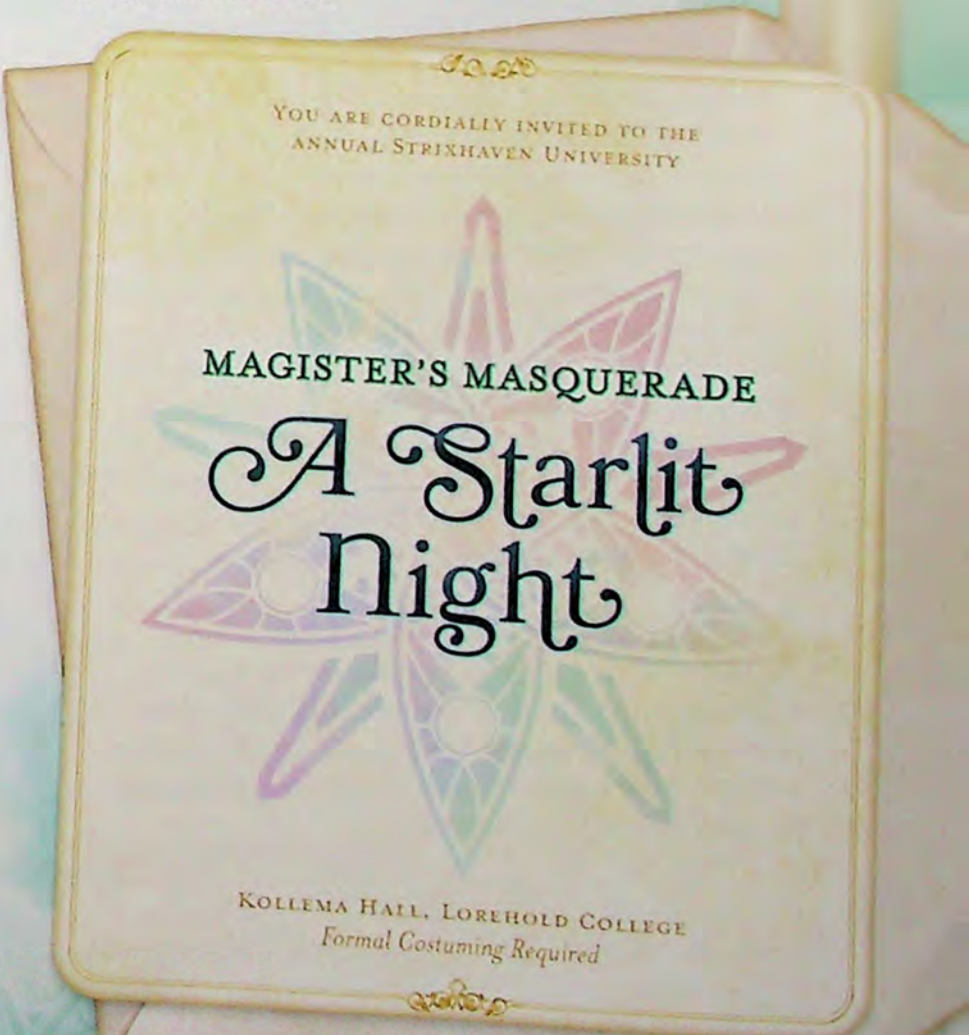
The night the characters return to Strixhaven, there's a welcoming reception at Bow's End Tavern. This event gives students the opportunity to socialize with friends and learn more about the Magister's Masquerade. More information about Bow's End Tavern and a map of the location appear in chapter 3.

After the characters have settled into their lodgings, they find their classmates drifting toward Bow's End Tavern for the reception, including some of the characters' Friends, Beloveds, or Rivals. When the characters arrive at Bow's End, read or paraphrase the following text:

> A crowd of boisterous third-year students fills Bow's End Tavern, abuzz with conversations about the Magister's Masquerade and dream outfits for the event. Among the crowds of chatting friends and mingling students are decorated tables; one is surrounded by the masquerade's student organizers, and the others are covered in outlandish snacks. A wave of shouts rises from the back of the tavern, where high-energy games are underway.

Besides students, several faculty members also attend the reception. Among them is one of Lorehold College's deans, Augusta Tullus (lawful neutral human **Lorehold professor of order**; see chapter 7).

Masquerade Invitation



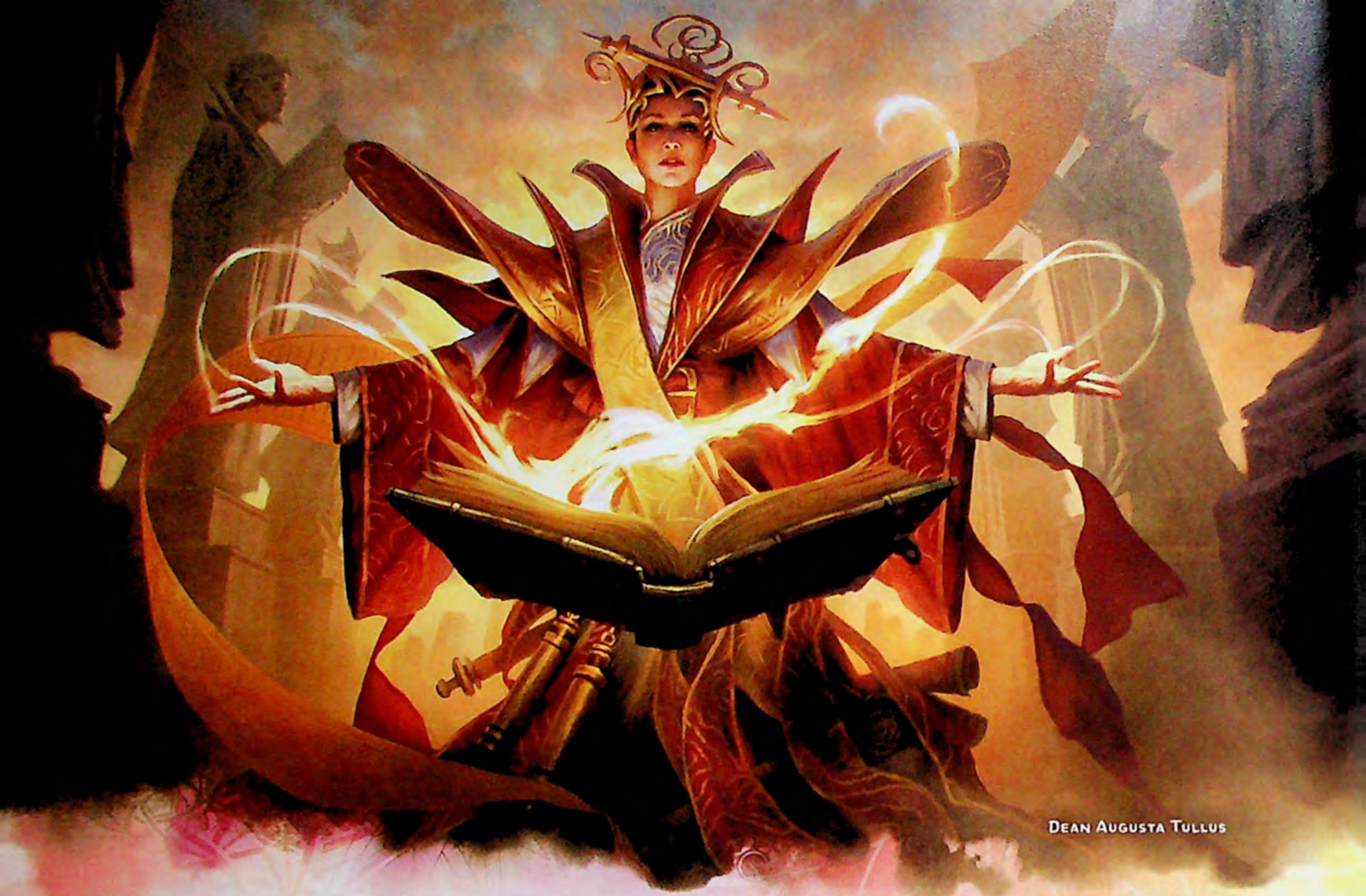
You are cordially invited to the
annual Strixhaven University

MAGISTER'S MASQUERADE

A Starlit Night

Kollema Hall, Lorehold College

Formal Costuming Required



Characters recognize her as the professor of their Advanced Arcane History course. If approached, the dean proves pleasant and professional. Her attendance at the reception is noteworthy, but its relevance won't be clear until later in the adventure.

At the reception, the characters can catch up with other students and enjoy magical snacks. The event concludes with a student getting ill (see "One Too Many?")—foreshadowing events later in this adventure—and disgruntled students demanding the characters face them in a magical contest (see "The Challenge"). This challenge works best if it comes from a character's Rival.

Activities and Rumors

Students the characters interact with during the reception might want to participate in any of the activities on the Reception Activities table. Roll an activity or choose one from this table to determine the characters' interactions.

Reception Activities

d6	Activity
1	**Catching Up.** The student wants to talk about their recent break, which they spent reading everything by a specific author, mastering an esoteric game, or traveling to an exciting location.
2	**Join the Committee.** The student has big ideas and wants to join the masquerade organizing committee with the character.
3	**Bar Games.** The student asks the character to play a friendly bar game, such as darts or cards. This is more an opportunity to chat than about winning.
4	**Eating Everything.** The student wants to try every food available at the event (see "Snack Sampling"). They ask the character to join them.
5	**Perfect Opportunity.** The student has a crush on or rivalry with another student. They ask the character for help talking to or pranking this student.
6	**Drama.** The student is anxious about something that happened during their break or about the impending academic year (perhaps the masquerade).

Brian Sola

Additionally, in the course of the reception, characters might hear any of the gossip on the Third-Year Rumor Mill table. Not all the rumors are true, as noted in the table, but some foreshadow events later in this adventure.

THIRD-YEAR RUMOR MILL

d6	Rumor	Accuracy
1	Some professors seek to change Mage Tower for the sake of student safety. Many students oppose this.	False
2	There's a ailment going around campus. Several students say they haven't been feeling well.	True (Murgaxor's influence)
3	Rumor has it that the Magister's Masquerade is actually a secret test.	False
4	People are still on edge after mage hunters crept onto campus last year.	True
5	Supposedly one of the Founder Dragons will be a surprise guest of honor at the masquerade.	False
6	Dean Tullus wants this year's masquerade to focus on Strixhaven history—boring to many students.	True

RELATIONSHIP ENCOUNTER

If there are students with whom the characters wish to earn Relationship Points, treat the reception as a Relationship encounter using the rules in chapter 3. Have players note the results of this encounter on their copies of the tracking sheet.

MASQUERADE COMMITTEE

A student committee organizes the Magister's Masquerade, and its leaders use the reception to get other students excited about the event. Characters who approach the committee table learn that, throughout the academic year, third-year students will periodically be assigned tasks to help prepare for the masquerade. The adventure assumes that committee leaders are in charge of much of the masquerade's orchestration, but if your players are excited about contributing to the event's decor, menu, entertainment, and so on, you can incorporate their suggestions into the descriptions of the preparation tasks and the masquerade itself.

SNACK SAMPLING

Characters who investigate any of the tavern tables laden with snacks find an array of magic-infused dishes. Roll or choose an option from Bow's End Snacks table to see what's available at any given table. All these dishes include magical ingredients meant to give the dishes a little extra flair. The first time a creature samples any of these dishes, it must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma (Deception) check to avoid making an alarmed face, coughing loudly, or having another potentially embarrassing reaction.

BOW'S END SNACKS

d6	Snack
1	Eel rolls with sticky rice, jalapeno-infused honey-ginger sauce, and wriggling eels
2	Exploding cheese puffs that pop in the mouth with cheesy flavor and illusory fireworks
3	Fire beetle paste, a scorchingly spicy dip limned in illusory flames, served with toasted crackers
4	Midnight mushroom caps with blinking, phosphorescent spots, stuffed with crumbled cheese
5	Pickled black lotus root that turns the tongue of anyone who eats it purple
6	Chilled vegetable rolls in glass-leaf wrappers that feel like they shatter when bitten

ONE TOO MANY?

After the characters catch up with other students and participate in any other activities that they please, read or paraphrase the following text:

> Out of place amid the laughter and conversation comes an uncomfortable-sounding groan. Two students escort a third sick-looking student toward the tavern doors. As they pass, one of the escorts says, "One too many eel rolls, I guess."

The student being escorted out is suffering from the curse caused by *Murgaxor's orb* (detailed at the beginning of this adventure). At the moment, characters have no way of learning this, and no one lets it dampen the reception's atmosphere for long.

If the characters follow the sick student or check up on them later, they learn the student was delivered to the infirmary, spent a night there with a bad headache, and recovered by the next morning. A character who succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check also learns that the sick student was summoned to Dean Tullus's office earlier in the day, shortly before the reception. During the meeting, Dean Tullus addressed the student's chronic lateness to class; the student recalls that the conversation was brief and cordial.

THE CHALLENGE

After the scene with the sick student, give the characters one last opportunity to do anything else they please at the reception. As they prepare to leave, one or more students approach and challenge them.

Who Are the Rivals?

Determine who issues the challenge. If one or more of the characters have Rivals, pick a Rival to be the challenger. The challenger leads a group the same size as the characters' party, which could include other Rivals. If none of the characters have Rivals, students who were part of the opposing Mage Tower team in chapter 4 or from the "Fellow Students" section in chapter 3 can issue this challenge.

Why a Challenge?

Choose one of the following grudges as the reason for the challenge:

Dangerous. The Rival accuses the characters of causing the dangerous events that have occurred over the past two years. They can't prove it, but they want to punish the characters anyway.

Love Polygon. The Rival blames a character for a relationship disappointment.

Mage Tower Affront. The characters beat the Rival at Mage Tower in chapter 4, or the characters' efforts caused the Rival to lose a bet.

So Special. The Rival just can't stand the characters. Now's the time to take them down a notch.

Challenge Details

The opposing students challenge the characters to meet the following midnight at the Furygale Repository on the Prismari College campus. The repository is a dumping ground for magical experiments and dangerous spell reagents. It's empty at night and out of the way, so the duel isn't likely to be discovered or disturbed.

In the characters don't want to participate in this challenge, the Rival tries to compel the character to participate. This could include any of the following coercions:

- Offering the characters something they desire or important information if they win
- Stealing a magic item or personal heirloom from a character's lodgings
- Revealing embarrassing information, perhaps to the whole school, an instructor, or a Beloved
- Fabricating blackmail material that implicates a character in past dangerous events

If one or more characters accept the challenge, the "Fate at Furygale" encounter occurs at midnight of the following night. Allow characters to spend the intervening time as they please, likely with their first day of studies or other responsibilities. A character who spends time seeking information about Furygale easily learns the details in the "Furygale" section of chapter 1.

The characters can arrive at the Furygale Repository whenever they please and find it empty—no one is using the storage site this early in the academic year. The students who challenged the characters arrive at midnight.

If the characters refuse even in the face of the Rival's coercion, the Rival leaves. The next day, the characters learn that the Rival has taken more extreme actions—potentially involving one of the characters' Friends or Beloveds—to force the characters to come to Furygale.

Fate at Furygale

The Furygale Repository, on the Prismari campus, is a storage facility where magical experiments are disposed of. Magic woven into the structure makes the interior a zone of wild magic. Over time, these unpredictable magical forces break down the failed or ill-conceived student projects disposed of within. Because of its air of danger and relative isolation, the Furygale Repository is a popular spot for Strixhaven students who want to meet without being observed by university staff.

Furygale Repository

When the characters arrive at the Furygale Repository, they find a warehouse-like structure with walls that slowly change shape and color, as if melting and reforming. Floating warning signs around it read, "Danger: Elemental Forces." A cavernous opening in the south wall provides access to the interior. When the characters enter, read or paraphrase the following text:

> The space within the Furygale Repository is a vast, open area filled with discarded magical creations. Elemental forces infuse the structure's walls and numerous alcoves, the surfaces of which slowly shift, glowing with discordant lights that shimmer, clash, consume one another, and then glow anew.

Map 5.1 shows the layout of the repository.

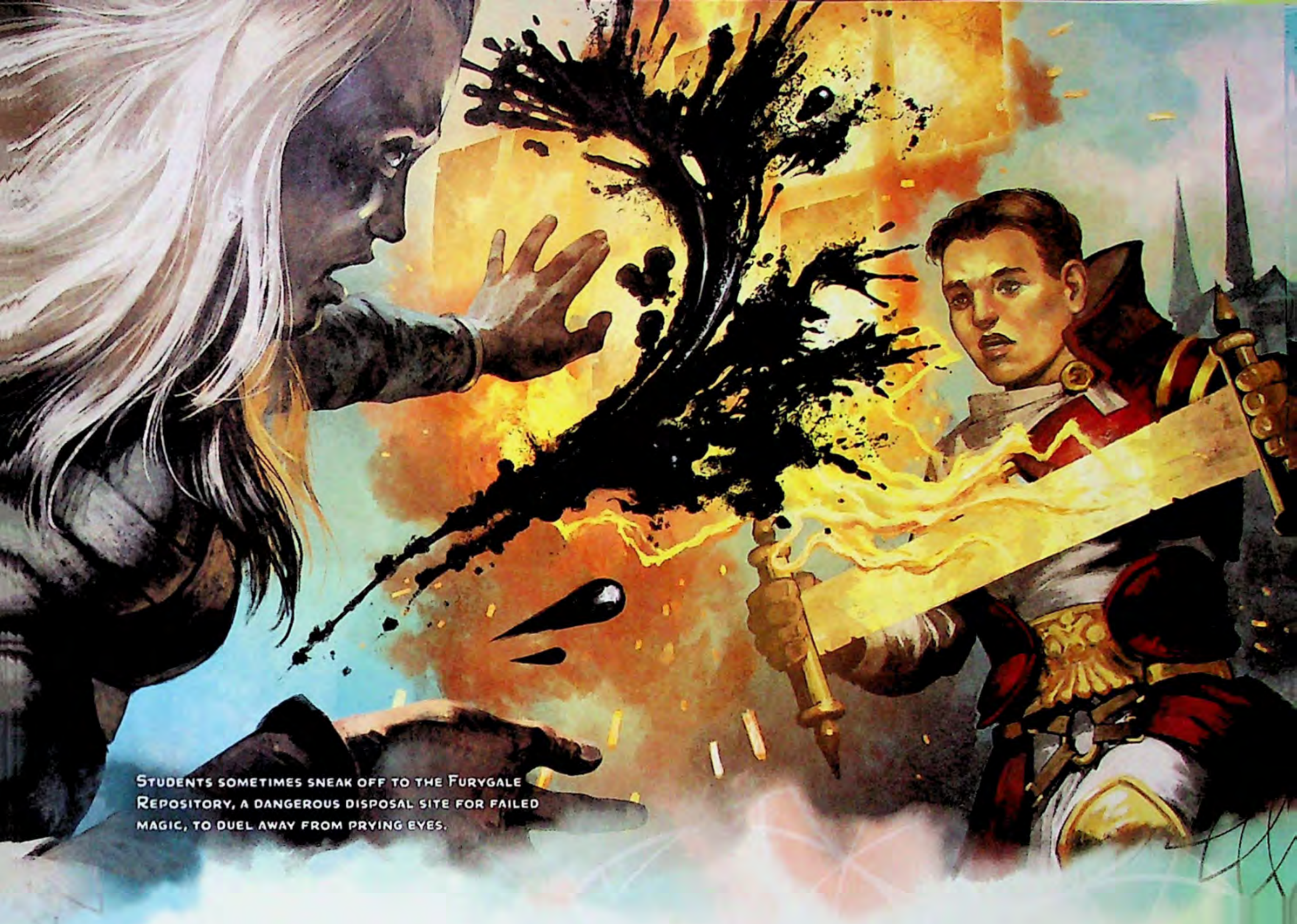
Furygale Repository Features

The following features apply throughout the Furygale Repository:

Ceilings and Walls. The walls and ceilings are as hard and durable as stone. The structure's ceiling rises 20 feet above the floor.

Illumination. The repository's scintillating walls shed bright light out to a range of 20 feet and dim light for an additional 20 feet.

Magic Protections. The repository is designed to break down magic without damaging creatures. See "Duels in the Repository" for details on the site's protective magic. The site's magic restores hit points to creatures within the struc-



STUDENTS SOMETIMES SNEAK OFF TO THE FURYGALE REPOSITORY, A DANGEROUS DISPOSAL SITE FOR FAILED MAGIC, TO DUEL AWAY FROM PRYING EYES.

TOMASZ JEDRUSZEK

ture, whether they're dueling or not. After taking damage in the repository, a creature still in the building is healed to full hit points after not taking damage for 1 minute.

Wild Magic. Once per turn, when a creature expends a spell slot to cast a spell of 1st level or higher, an additional effect might occur. That creature must roll a d10. On a roll of 1, they must then roll on the Wild Magic Surge table in the "Sorcerer" section of the *Player's Handbook* to determine which wild magic effect occurs.

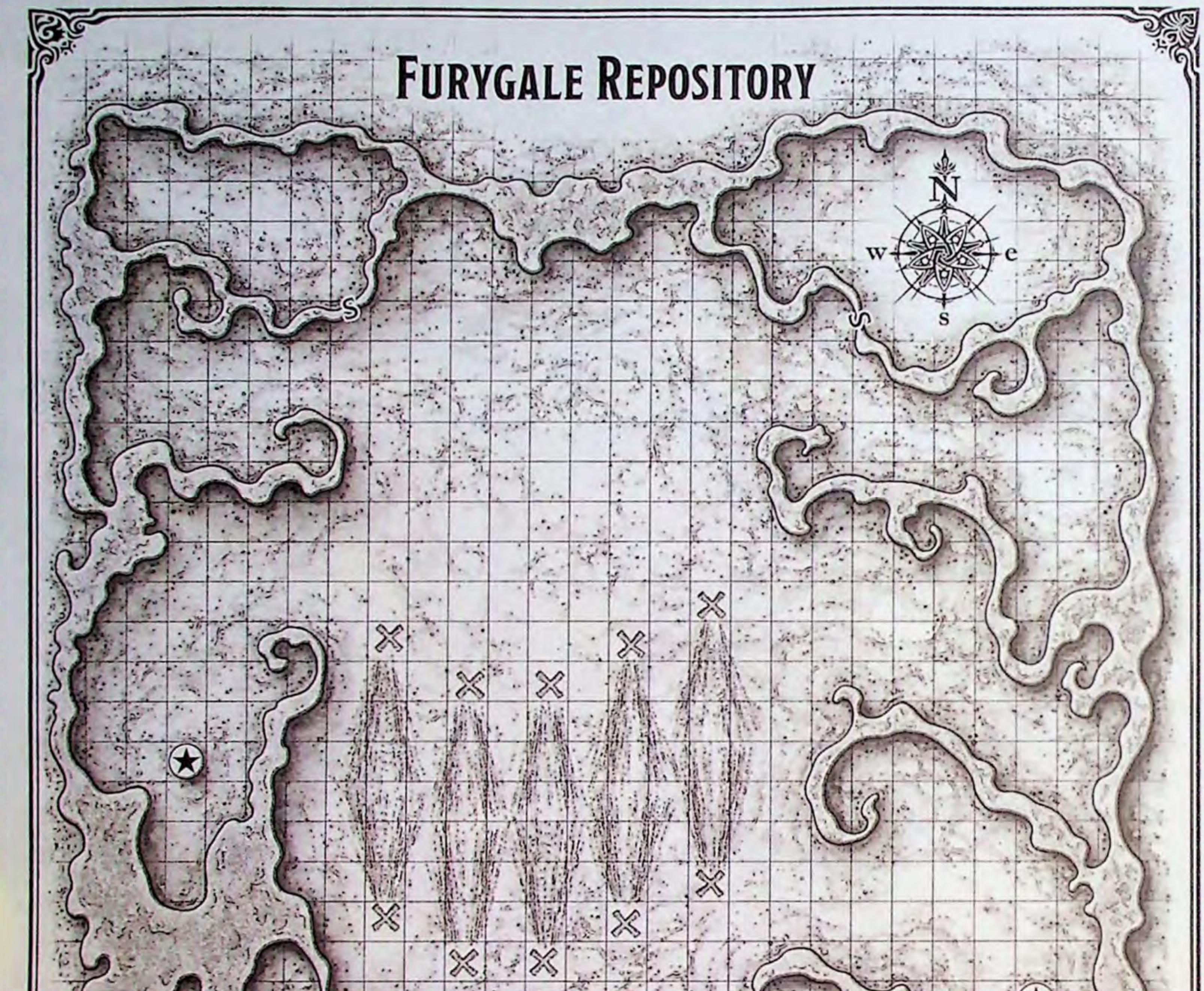
FURYGALE REPOSITORY SECRETS

If the heroes arrive at the Furygale Repository before the challenge, they have the opportunity to explore the site and potentially discover some of the structure's secrets.

Animate Statues. The symbols that look like circles inscribed with stars represent statues of knights designed with flourishes evocative of the four elements. The statues have partially melted from longterm exposure to the Furygale Repository's magic, but they have also gained magical mobility and limited sapience; use the **helmed horror** stat block to represent them. Each statue protects the site from intruders, animating and attacking any suspicious creature that comes within 10 feet of it. A statue fights until it is destroyed or its opponents leave the Furygale Repository.

Duelist Marks. Ten X marks mar the floor. A character who succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check knows that these marks serve as stations for student duelists, and the scars between them were made by violent magic.

Secret Storage Chambers. Two secret doors are located in the northern wall of the structure. Finding either door requires a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check. The chamber behind each secret door contains various leaking jars and boxes of used alchemical reagents. A character who spends 5 minutes searching either room and succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check discovers two *potions of healing* and a packet containing *dust of sneezing and choking* (the contents of both rooms are the same).


FURYGALE REPOSITORY
N
W
E
S
S
S
1 square = 5 feet

Map 5.1: Furygale Repository

MIKE SCHLEY (L), LUCA SMILSHKALNE (R)

Duels in the Repository

Strixhaven students have the following rules for duels at the Furygale Repository:

- Only two students duel at a time.
- Duelists must use magic to defeat their opponents.
- Weapons and magic items aren't allowed.
- A duelist can't receive aid from non-duelists.
- A duel is over when one duelist surrenders or is incapacitated.
- A duelist may not kill another duelist.

Any duelist who breaks these rules loses the duel. If a duelist kills an opponent, the killer, if discovered, is expelled from the university and forced to pay for *raise dead* to be cast on the dead duelist.

As mentioned in the "Magic Protections" portion of the "Furygale Repository Features" section, creatures that take damage in this area are healed by Furygale's magic.

Dueling Begins

If the characters go to the repository early, their opponents arrive at midnight. If the characters arrive on time, their opponents are already there waiting at the duelist marks in the center of the structure.

Once both parties meet and banter, one-on-one duels commence following the rules outlined in the "Duels in the Repository" section. The Rivals use the pledgemage stat blocks appropriate for their colleges (see chapter 7). All their actions are considered permissible magic for the purposes of dueling.

Run as many one-on-one duels as the characters want to participate in. During these duels, remember to account for the wild magic effect detailed in "Furygale Repository Features." The challenge is complete when every character who wants to has dueled. The team with the most victors is deemed the winning team and earns bragging rights.

Before the groups go their separate ways, though, things take an unexpected turn.

Foul Play

At the conclusion of the duels but before the characters leave the Furygale Repository, one of their opponents collapses. A moment later, another opponent falls. In seconds, all the opponents but one have collapsed. Although there's no way for the characters to know this yet, the collapsed opponents have been rendered unconscious by the curse from *Murgaxor's orb* (detailed at the start of the

The magic of Furygale is erratic and dangerous. Students dueling there often get in over their heads.

adventure). Dean Tullus spread the curse to several students during the recent reception, and Murgaxor is now testing his magic's power.

The one remaining opponent reacts as follows:

> "What ... what are you doing?" your opponent stammers, panicking as their friends sprawl across the floor. "Cut it out, cheaters! You can't do this!"

The last opponent standing blames the characters for what has happened and attacks. On their first turn, the opponent casts a spell. This proves to be a terrible mistake, as the wild magic of the Furygale Repository surges, summoning an **oni**. The oni appears near the entrance to the repository and does as it pleases. Without hesitating, it moves to attack the closest conscious student. After inadvertantly summoning the oni, the opponent tries to flee, leaving the characters to fight the oni by themselves.

In the course of the ensuing battle, a character can try to convince the opponent that the characters weren't responsible for rendering the other students unconscious, doing so with a successful DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check. On a success, the opponent believes, albeit grudgingly, that the characters aren't to blame for what happened. At that point, the opponent accepts blame for summoning the oni and helps the characters defeat it.

AFTERMATH

Once the danger is dealt with, the characters must decide what to do about the unconscious students.

A character who casts *detect magic* on the unconscious students discovers an aura of enchantment magic surrounding each of them, along with some strange element they can't quite place. This is an oddity caused by *Murgaxor's orb* (detailed at the start of this adventure). A character who detected similar magic in a previous Strixhaven adventure realizes this magic has the same unusual signature.

Shaking or slapping the unconscious opponents rouses them. When they come to, the students all have terrible headaches and recall vague but dreadful nightmares. They don't know what happened to them, but some are eager to go to the infirmary. They have no more desire to duel the characters and might even be visibly scared of them. They won't publicly accuse the characters of a crime, though, as doing so would mean openly admitting that they snuck into the Furygale Repository.

Should Strixhaven faculty members find out about the characters sneaking into the repository, the characters are warned that further rule-breaking will result in disciplinary consequences.

ADVANCED ARCANE HISTORY EXAM: RELICS

During this year at Strixhaven, the characters are enrolled together in Advanced Arcane History. The course is held in a lecture hall in the Biblioplex (area B7 on map 3.1 in chapter 3) and taught by Dean Tullus. Several weeks after their encounter at the Furygale Repository, the characters have their first Exam for the course (see chapter 3 for details on Exams).

THE RELIC LECTURE

During an early Advanced Arcane History course that all the characters are attending, Dean Tullus displays a relic she discovered during a recent expedition. Read or paraphrase the following text to describe part of her lecture:

> "A historian interrogates the stories we tell ourselves about the past, learning how true they are—or otherwise," lectures Dean Tullus. "Only by understanding the truth of the past might we learn lessons applicable to our magic in the present. Take this, for example." The professor reveals a translucent orb. Within it a coil of green mist endlessly knots around itself. "I unearthed this in the Fortress Badlands during my most recent expedition. Its creator and use remain uncertain. But by investigating the reason for its creation, we stand to learn more about those who made it and how their lessons might teach us more about our own magic."

Dean Tullus eagerly takes questions on her lecture or the relic she exhibits, but she doesn't know much about it yet. She suspects it was used as a magical focus by an ancient wizard she has yet to identify. A character who subtly casts *detect magic* in class learns the object exudes an aura of enchantment.

The class ends with a reminder that the first Exam is only a few days away and that it will test students on their knowledge of historical relics and the relics' use in magic.

STUDYING PHASE

The day before the Exam, the characters can study the course material. A character can use any ability check and skill during the Studying phase.

Once you've asked each player how their character is approaching the Studying phase, resolve that phase by having each character who studies make a DC 17 ability check. Make sure players keep track of their characters' rerolls and apply them during the Testing phase.

Lorehold professors often use relics they've unearthed in their lectures about magical objects.

FRANCISCO MIYARA

Testing Phase

On the day of the Exam, each character makes two ability checks related to parts of the test:

Commonly Used Magic Devices. Identifying types of magic devices, from battlefield magic items to objects useful as spell foci, requires a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check.

Historical Relics in Magic. Writing a short essay about historical relics and how they were famously used in ritual magic requires a successful DC 17 Intelligence (History) check.

Have each player note their character's Exam results—how many Student Dice they gained and what skills they used during the test—on their copies of the tracking sheet.

Dressing for Success

Although the Magister's Masquerade takes place late in the Strixhaven academic year, it occupies a significant place in the mind of many third-year students. To help students decide what to wear, the administration announces a theme for the masquerade and hosts a fashion show early in the year.

The theme announcement and fashion show take place in the weeks following the Advanced Arcane History Exam.

The Masquerade's Theme

This year, the Strixhaven faculty has chosen to honor the school's storied history in the theme for the Magister's Masquerade.

During one of her Advanced Arcane History classes, Dean Tullus explains that the theme for the masquerade is "A Starlit Evening." Just as the light from stars is visible for thousands of years, so too does the professor want to see the students' attire shine with the same wondrous history. She then offers extra credit in her course to students who show her costume designs evocative of some aspect of Strixhaven's history ahead of the ball.

Historical Research

To meet Dean Tullus's demand for historical authenticity, a character must research Strixhaven fashion through the centuries. This requires spending 6 hours studying at the Biblioplex and succeeding on a DC 14 Intelligence (History) check. Characters who exceed DC 18 on this check also learn the information in the "Records Gap" section.

After successfully conducting their research, a character can show their notes to Dean Tullus and receive extra credit on their second Advanced Arcane History Exam, as noted in the "Exam Results" section for that Exam.

Magic and style are on full display at a Strixhaven fashion show.

ALESSANDRA PISANO

Records Gap

A character who excels at their fashion research notices a gap in the Biblioplex's records approximately 200 years ago. All information about that year's masquerade is missing. If a character pursues the missing information, cross-checking other university records reveals an unusually high number of student deaths that same year. While Strixhaven experiences the occasional rare fatality among the student body, that year dozens of students perished. No available record notes how the students died. Characters who, in chapter 4, learned about the student expelled for practicing forbidden magic realize that these deaths occurred in the same year that student was expelled. Beyond this, no other information on the topic is currently available.

If the characters mention the records gap to one or more faculty members, it sparks very little interest, since the missing records are so old. These faculty members have neither the time nor the recollection to shed light on the mystery.

Fashion Show Preparations

As part of the preparations for the Magister's Masquerade, many Strixhaven students participate in a fashion show on the Silverquill College campus at the Rose Stage (detailed in chapter 3). During this event, student and alumni designers present fashions meant to inspire masquerade attendees and help them prepare for the ball. After the show, some of the outfits are auctioned off to help fund the masquerade. Characters might learn about the event by hearing about it from other students or spotting flyers posted around campus.

Fashion Show Timing

Events related to the fashion show play out over the course of several weeks. Characters might decide to design their own fashions, model designs at the show, or sell their works at the auction. Other students might get involved in the fashion show as well, coaxing characters into the event.

Let the players know the ways in which their characters can participate in the fashion show, and allow them to do so as much as they're interested, building toward the event at a date you set. These activities can happen in the background as characters focus on other goals or as the events in the "Party Preparations" section take place.

Fashion Design

Characters with an eye for design might create an outfit and enter it in the fashion show.

Creating an Outfit. To create an outfit, a character must describe the look they're after, spend 24 hours crafting the outfit, then make a successful DC 10 Dexterity check using leatherworker's tools, weaver's tools, or similarly appropriate artisan's tools. If the check fails, no wearable outfit is produced. If the character is successful, the character creates an outfit that is accepted into the show. Note the total of this check, which will help determine the outfit's value at the fashion auction later.

If a character is Friends with Zanther Bowen or Aurora Luna Wynterstarr (see the "Fellow Students" section in chapter 3), these students eagerly help the character with the outfit, providing advantage on the Dexterity check.

Choosing a Model. A character who designs their own outfit can model the design or have someone else do so. This model takes part in the activities detailed in the "Fashion Modeling" section.

Rival Designers. Characters' Rivals might submit their own outfits to the fashion show. Aside from competing against a character, they might invite other characters or friendly students to model their fashions, leading to backstage drama.

Fashion Modeling

A character might be invited by a fashion designer to model the designer's outfit.

Preparation. A character intending to model an outfit must spend the hour before the show preparing by dressing, making final adjustments, and adding magical flourishes.

Walking the Runway. When the time comes for a character to model an outfit by walking the runway, the character must make a DC 10 Dexterity (Acrobatics) or Charisma (Performance) check. If the check fails, the character suffers some mishap, and their modeling doesn't help sell that outfit. If the check succeeds, the modeling goes well, and you should note the total of the check, which will help determine the outfit's value for the fashion auction.

The Fashion Show

When the characters arrive at the Rose Stage the night of the fashion show, read or paraphrase the following text:

> Shimmering lights and soft music drift across the Rose Stage and the surrounding seating as well-dressed students, professors, and alumni guests mingle. Behind the runway, student fashion designers, models, and their assistants buzz to and from backstage dressing rooms, making finishing touches before the show begins.

For the fashion show, the Rose Stage is divided into the external seating and open areas for audience mingling, the backstage for dressing, and the stage itself. See map 3.5 in chapter 3 for a map of the Rose Stage.

The event includes a preshow period for mingling and light refreshment, the show itself, the fashion auction, and a brief closing reception. Characters can engage in any portion of the event, though models and designers typically spend the period prior to the show preparing in the hectic backstage dressing rooms.

Fashion Show Rumors

Roll on the Fashion Show Rumors table to determine what students chitchat with characters about during the event. The veracity of these rumors is up to you; use them to add additional drama to the event.

Fashion Show Rumors

d6	Rumor
1	Another designer stole the student's design and is trying to pass it off as their own work!
2	An alumni designer is here to watch and recruit models for professional work.
3	One of the outfits is actually alive.
4	A student activist group plans to crash the event in protest of wasteful magical decadences.
5	One of the colleges' deans wants to buy an outfit and has sent a proxy to bid on it.
6	A plot is underway to animate an outfit while it's being worn down the runway, embarrassing the model and designer.

On the Runway

After the guests take their seats, one by one an announcer introduces each model and whose outfit they're wearing, then proceeds to describe the outfit. All the while, the model walks the perimeter of the Rose Stage, doing their best to highlight the virtues of the outfit. The fashion show lasts 1 hour.

Besides the characters, numerous students and Strixhaven alumni participate in the fashion show, and all the outfits on the Fashion at Auction table are modeled.

Fashion Auction

Following the fashion show, designers can auction their work to help fund the Magister's Masquerade. The auction takes place at the Rose Stage immediately following the fashion show. Dozens of students attend the show and the auction, including all the students in the "Fellow Students" section in chapter 3. Three of these students—Urzmaktok Grojsh, Rubina Larkingdale, and Melwythorne—submitted designs and auction them off.

Determining a Design's Value. To determine how much a character's outfit sells for at auction, add the number the designer recorded when creating the outfit and the number the model recorded when modeling the outfit (if any). Look up this total in the Check Total column of the Fashion Auction table to determine the outfit's value, along with some comparable outfits also being sold at the auction.

Buying Fashions. A character can bid on a design being auctioned off, ultimately winning it for the price listed in the Value column of the Fashion at Auction table. If you want to play out the bidding, the opening bid for each design is half of its value. Other students might bid against characters, driving up the outfit's value to its listed price. If you want to make bidding particularly intense, a rival bidder might drive up an outfit's price to 50 percent more than its listed value before relenting.

FASHION AT AUCTION

Check Total	Value	Comparable Outfit
10–12	15 gp	Leather suit with a self-tying tie
13–16	30 gp	Violet ballgown with puffy sleeves
17–19	60 gp	Sleek tailcoat with levitating tails
20–23	120 gp	Black sheath dress studded with animated crimson eyes
24–27	240 gp	Kurta embroidered with magically orbiting constellations
28–31	360 gp	Mermaid dress with illusory jellyfish bobbing around it
32–35	540 gp	Kaleidoscopic agbada shifting with geometric patterns
36–39	720 gp	Daring assemblage of hovering ink splotches
40+	1,000 gp	Gloves that grow to cover the wearer in regal draconic scales

RELATIONSHIP ENCOUNTER

If there are students with whom the characters wish to earn Relationship Points, treat the fashion show as a Relationship encounter using the rules in chapter 3. Have players note the results of this encounter on their copies of the tracking sheet.

FASHION MONTAGE

Following the fashion show, characters might still be undecided on what they're going to wear to the Magister's Masquerade. If they want ideas, it's time for a fashion montage.

Have each player write two or three ideas for wild magical outfits on pieces of paper and collect them. Then, during an outing with friends or privately using their *masque charms*, the characters can try out the proposed outfits. Have players select from the collected ideas at random, then describe their characters trying on the outfit. Allow characters to try out as many outfits as they please. Other students might also be present to offer their advice, support, or criticism.

PARTY PREPARATIONS

Either after the fashion show or while preparations for that event are underway, the characters each receive a request from the masquerade organizing committee asking for their help. Two tasks need to be undertaken:

- A trip to Witherbloom's bayou to harvest marshwicks (see "Sedgemoor Harvest" below)
- A day of gathering supplies stored at the Biblioplex (see "Biblioplex Supplies" below)

SEDGEMOOR HARVEST

In Sedgemoor grow phosphorescent marshwicks. The masquerade organizing committee has determined that these plants would be perfect for creating starry decorations for the ball's "A Starlit Evening" theme. A considerable number of marshwicks are needed, and they must be harvested by hand. The characters are part of a group that includes ten other students (apprentices from all five colleges; see chapter 7 for their stat blocks).

Harvesting the required number of marshwicks from Sedgemoor takes 8 hours. A character who succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check can reduce this time for everyone by 1 hour (to a minimum of 4 hours).

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS IN THE BAYOU

Sedgemoor's bayou is full of dangerous creatures. For every hour the characters' group spends there, roll on the Bayou Encounters table to see what they discover. Use map 3.6 of Sedgemoor, found in chapter 3, for any encounters where a map would be useful.

Assume the characters are off by themselves when an encounter occurs; however, the other students aren't far away and can frighten away a monster or two if the characters get into serious trouble.

BAYOU ENCOUNTERS

d20	Encounter
1–4	No encounter
5–6	1 **giant crocodile** and 2 **crocodiles**
7–8	A rare tourmaline-coiffed woodpecker, which a student insists on studying, adding 1 hour to the expedition
9–10	1 **troll** who insists she's a magically transformed Strixhaven student
11–12	4 **lizardfolk shamans** also looking for marshwicks
13–14	2 **shambling mounds** covered in flowers
15–16	An archaic university emblem worth 50 gp
17–18	1 **blue slaad**, which is lost
19	A **green hag** who will give the group all the marshwicks they need if one of them invites her to the Magister's Masquerade
20	A dense stand of marshwicks that shaves 1 hour off the expedition if harvested

BIBLIOPLEX SUPPLIES

The Magister's Masquerade is such a Strixhaven institution that an entire section of the Biblioplex's archives is devoted to it. Along with records about the event, these archives serve as storage for masquerade supplies needed annually. The characters are among those students the masquerade organiz-

LIE SETIAWAN

ing committee tasks with retrieving the hundreds of storage boxes conveying them to Kollema Hall. Ten other students (apprentices from all five colleges; see chapter 7 for their stat blocks) are sent along with the characters.

Transporting the Supplies

Finding all the supplies related to the Magister's Masquerade, moving them out of the archives, and then transporting them to Kollema Hall should take the characters and their group 6 hours to complete. That assumes everyone in the group helps the entire time and someone arranges for transportation of the supplies. If one or more characters refuse to help or slip away for part of the time, add 1 hour to the task's duration. If the characters don't arrange transportation in advance, the task stalls until they make arrangements.

Masquerade Research. The records in the Biblioplex archives weren't available to the characters when they were doing their historical research earlier in the academic year (see "Records Gap" earlier in the chapter). A character who ignores their manual labor duties for an hour and investigates the archive records can make a DC 14 Intelligence (History) check. If they succeed, they discover a firsthand report from 200 years ago involving a mysterious illness striking campus. Dozens of students fell victim to it, experiencing fatigue and headaches; many of them died, wasting away in a matter of days despite all efforts to cure them.

Advanced Arcane History Exam: Devices

The characters' second Exam in Advanced Arcane History takes place a short while after they complete the errands in preparation for the masquerade. It tests students' knowledge of famous magical relics and the history behind their creation and use. However, this test is unusual because the characters' professor, Dean Tullus, doesn't show up to administer it.

THOSE WHO VISIT SEDGEMOOR ARE BOUND TO DISCOVER ITS WONDROUS INHABITANTS AND HIDDEN MYSTERIES.

STUDYING PHASE

The day before the Exam, the characters can study the course material. A character can use any ability check and skill during the Studying phase.

Once you've asked each player how their character is approaching the Studying phase, resolve that phase by having each character who studies make a DC 18 ability check. Make sure players keep track of their characters' rerolls and apply them during the Testing phase.

TESTING PHASE

On the day of the Exam, Dean Tullus doesn't show up for class. After 10 minutes of uncertainty, one of the dean's teaching assistants steps in to administer the Exam. Each character makes two ability checks related to parts of the test:

Magical Devices and Their Functions. Matching a list of magical devices with their functions requires a successful DC 18 Intelligence (History) check.

History of Magical Devices. Writing short essays about the origins of different magical devices requires a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Insight) check.

Have each player note their character's Exam results—how many Student Dice they gained and what skills they used during the test—on their copies of the tracking sheet.

CHEATING

Due to Dean Tullus's absence and the lax attention of the teaching assistant administering the test, cheating on this Exam is a relatively easy matter; the DCs of the two checks is only 12.

COSTUME DESIGNS

A character who showed Dean Tullus their plans for a historical masquerade costume adjusts their Exam results as follows:

- If the character failed the Exam, they pass instead.
- If the character passed the Exam, they ace it instead.
- If the character aced the Exam, they receive three Student Dice, instead of two.

FOLLOWING UP ON THE DEAN

After the Exam, a character who seeks to learn what happened to Dean Tullus can make a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check. If the check succeeds, the character learns that Dean Tullus just didn't show up for class, offering no explanation to her teaching assistants. Apparently, the normally fastidious dean was in her office at Archaeo Memorial Hall the whole time.

SUSPICIONS

After Dean Tullus's unexpected absence, characters might suspect that there's something off about the dean. A character who spends a day investigating Dean Tullus further and succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check learns one of the rumors on the Dean Tullus Rumors table.

Even if the characters choose not to investigate the dean, have some of these rumors come to the characters' attention to increase their suspicion. Characters who bring their misgivings to other faculty members are dismissed, as most professors are inured to students grousing about their teachers.

Should the characters try to investigate Dean Tullus's office, there's rarely a time she or other faculty aren't working in the Deans' Wing of Archaeo Memorial Hall. However, everyone knows the dean will be attending the Magister's Masquerade. It might serve as a perfect chance to slip into her office while she's otherwise occupied.

Ultimately, fuel the characters' suspicions, but they shouldn't have a chance to act until the night of the Magister's Masquerade.

DEAN TULLUS RUMORS

d4	Rumor
1	It seems like Dean Tullus is always working—she rarely leaves her office.
2	The dean is rarely seen without a relic from her recent expedition to the Fortress Badlands: a misty green orb.
3	Dean Tullus seems to be suffering from some malady. She has been uncharacteristically short with her students and seems to have frequent headaches.
4	The dean has relied on teaching assistants to cover several of her lessons, sometimes missing class without warning or explanation.

FANCYING UP FOOTWORK

In preparation for the Magister's Masquerade, the Strixhaven faculty sponsors a day of free, professional dance lessons for third-year students.

Dance lessons are offered about a week after the characters' second Advanced Arcane History Exam and are held on the Rose Stage on Silverquill College. Map 3.5 shows the layout of the Rose Stage, and a full description of it can be found in chapter 3.

Numerous students attend the dance classes, including several of the characters' Friends, Beloveds, and Rivals, as well as other students from the "Fellow Students" section in chapter 3.

The day of the dance classes, when the characters show up at the Rose Stage, read or paraphrase the following text:

> The hum of conversation, awkward laughter, and the sound of shuffling feet meet you as you approach the Rose Stage on Silverquill's campus. Upon the polished stage mill dozens of students, waiting nervously or trying out their best approximations of dance moves.

Several dozen students are already present at the Rose Stage, waiting for the dance lessons to begin. As soon as the characters arrive, a familiar student approaches one of them and points out a large, graceful, blue-skinned individual amid the crowd. "I think that's Nivall!" the student says, urging the characters to follow. "They're the greatest dancer ever to graduate from Strixhaven. Come on—I bet they'll teach us amazing moves!"

Dance instructor Nivall (chaotic good **djinni**) is a graceful individual who moves as naturally as a cloud. A recent Strixhaven graduate, Nivall leads the students through 4 hours of dance lessons. First, though, Nivall asks everyone to choose their first dance partner or allow Nivall to pair them off.

DANCE WITH ME?

Nivall walks students through a dance routine, then asks dancers to repeat it on their own. After each dance, Nivall encourages students to switch partners. During the dance lesson, at least one student each character dances with stands out. Roll on the Dance Partner Quirks table to determine how.

DANCE PARTNER QUIRKS

d6	The Character's Partner ...
1	Is already a fantastic dancer.
2	Treats a dance like a competitive, full-contact sport.
3	Is shy or embarrassed, giggling uncontrollably and never making eye contact.
4	Is fantastically clumsy or gets dizzy easily.
5	Tries to mask their discomfort by complaining about how stupid this all is.
6	Talks tirelessly about their incredible outfit for the masquerade.

RELATIONSHIP ENCOUNTER

If there are students with whom the characters wish to earn Relationship Points, treat the dance lesson as a Relationship encounter using the rules in chapter 3. Have players note the results of this encounter on their copies of the tracking sheet.

MARTA NALL

WHETHER LEARNING MAGIC OR DANCE, STRIXHAVEN STUDENTS THROW THEMSELVES INTO THEIR STUDIES WITH ZEAL.

PREPARING THE HALL

After the dance lessons, characters have time to focus on classes or other activities, but the date of the Magister's Masquerade is getting close. A week before the ball, each character receives a request from the masquerade organizing committee. They're asked to collaborate with other students to help prepare Kollema Hall for the masquerade. Unknown to the characters, though, Murgaxor uses this gathering to test his curse on a larger, more dangerous scale.

The following sections detail the parts of Kollema Hall where students set up for the Magister's Masquerade, along with several incidents that plague their work.

KOLLEMA HALL FEATURES

Kollema Hall is a historic structure dedicated to the respected Strixhaven professor, Magister Kollema—an innovator in the magical study of history. After his death, the university renamed this hall in his honor and built an enormous statue of him at its center. Details about the hall are summarized here:

Ceilings. The center of the hall rises 200 feet above the floor to a domed ceiling. The ceiling above each balcony is 20 feet high.

Doors. At night, all exterior doors to the hall are locked and sealed with *arcane lock* spells. Only Lorehold College faculty members, including Dean Tullus, know the password to bypass these spells. Opening a lock requires thieves' tools and a successful DC 25 Dexterity check (DC 35 while the *arcane lock* spell is active).

Illumination. Light from the domed skylight and *continual flame* spells cast on hanging lanterns provide bright illumination throughout the hall.

Magic Steps. All steps, including the hall's grand staircase, shift up or down like escalators, or flatten out completely before raising or lowering like lifts to accommodate larger creatures and mobility devices, depending on users' needs.

Transport Glyphs. Runic glyphs (marked as starbursts on map 5.2) are etched on the floor near the hall's main staircase. Any creature that stands on a glyph and says "up" or "down" is teleported to the transport glyph one floor higher or lower in the hall (depending on the direction spoken), along with anything the creature is wearing or carrying. If the destination glyph is occupied or the command doesn't make sense (such as saying "down" while on the hall's lowest floor), the transport glyph doesn't function.

KOLLEMA HALL LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to map 5.2. This map depicts only the building's first floor, part of its symmetrical second floor, and the infirmary on its third floor. The full building consists of ten floors, but these locations are the most relevant to the characters' activities.

K1. SERENITY QUADRANTS

Study areas under the hall's tiered balconies hold an impressive collection of history books. Sorting the book collection day and night are 1d4 **cogwork archivists** (see chapter 7).

K2. WISE KOLLEMA

The towering statue of Kollema holds an open book in one hand and a staff in the other and is visible from each of the hall's floors.

K3. DEMONSTRATION STAGE

This stage rises 5 feet to be flush with the base of Kollema's statue. Here, Lorehold professors perform demonstrations of their college's more physically demanding subjects, such as conjuring the spirits of past scholars and historians. On any given weekday, there is a 50 percent chance that one **Lorehold professor of chaos** and twelve **Lorehold pledgemages** (see chapter 7 for both) are taking part in a class here.

K4. SECOND-FLOOR STUDY

The collection of books upon the second floor focuses on historical accounts of mage-explorers and archaeomancers. Attending this collection day and night are 1d4 **cogwork archivists** (see chapter 7).

K5. INFIRMARY INTAKE

This infirmary is staffed by Zertha DeSantos (lawful good human **Lorehold professor of order**; see chapter 7). Colorful, framed art bears the messages "Keep eating habits healthy!" and "Never practice dangerous magic without a buddy!"

K6. INFIRMARY HALL

This featureless hall connects the infirmary and the sickroom.

K7. SICKROOM

The six stiff-sheeted beds in this rarely used sickroom provide places for ill or injured students to rest.

MASQUERADE PREPARATIONS

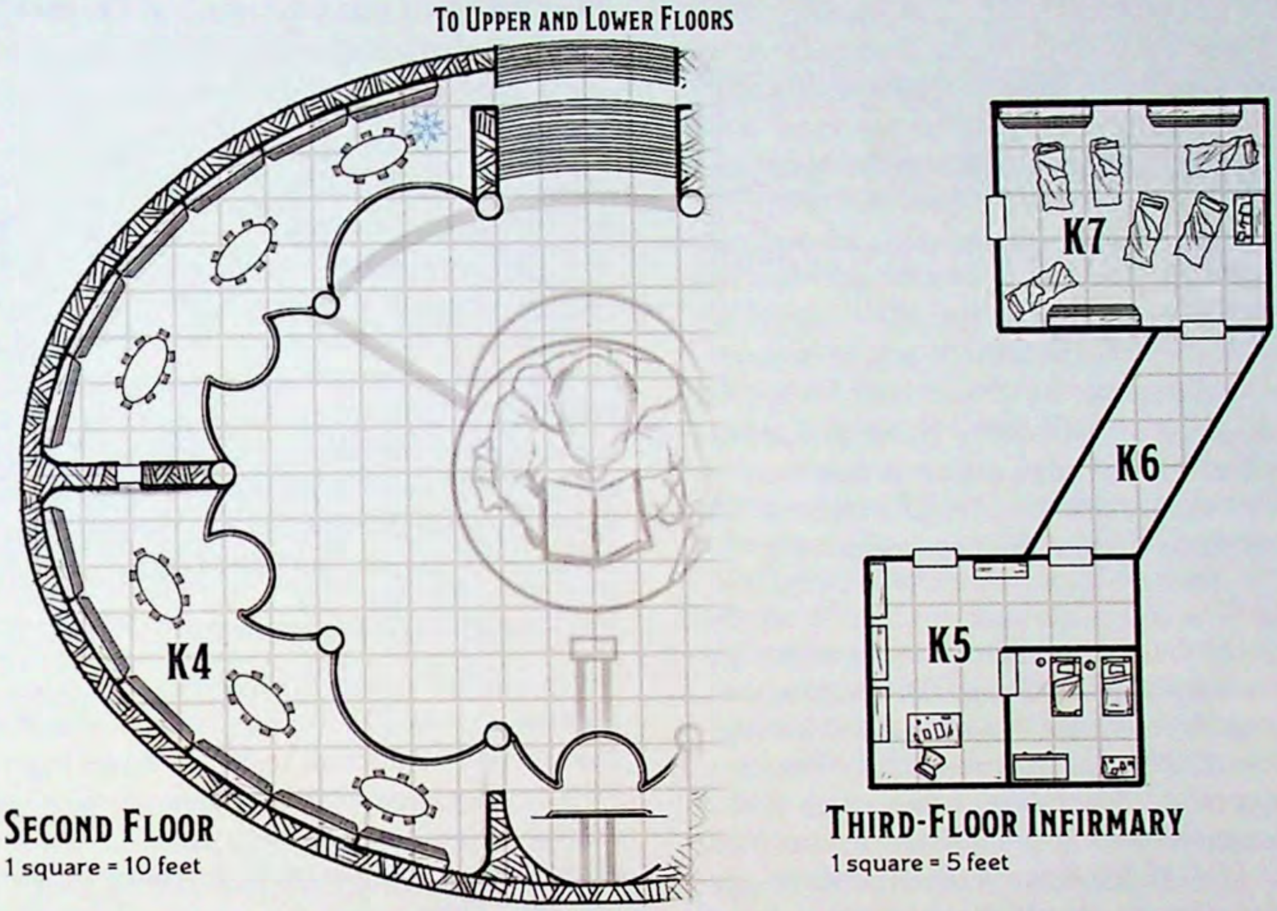
The following tasks must be completed to transform Kollema Hall:

- Remove all the tables from the first floor.
- Unpack the supplies delivered from the Biblioplex.
- Hang banners from the second floor.
- Hang colorful lanterns.
- Ready the stage for magic that will allow dancers to levitate.
- Prepare magical decorations for later deployment.
- Set up mundane decorations.

The characters are sent to complete these tasks along with twenty other students. These students include individuals the characters know and classmates they're less familiar with. Even for this number of helpers, the work takes at least 8 hours to complete—longer if students get distracted.

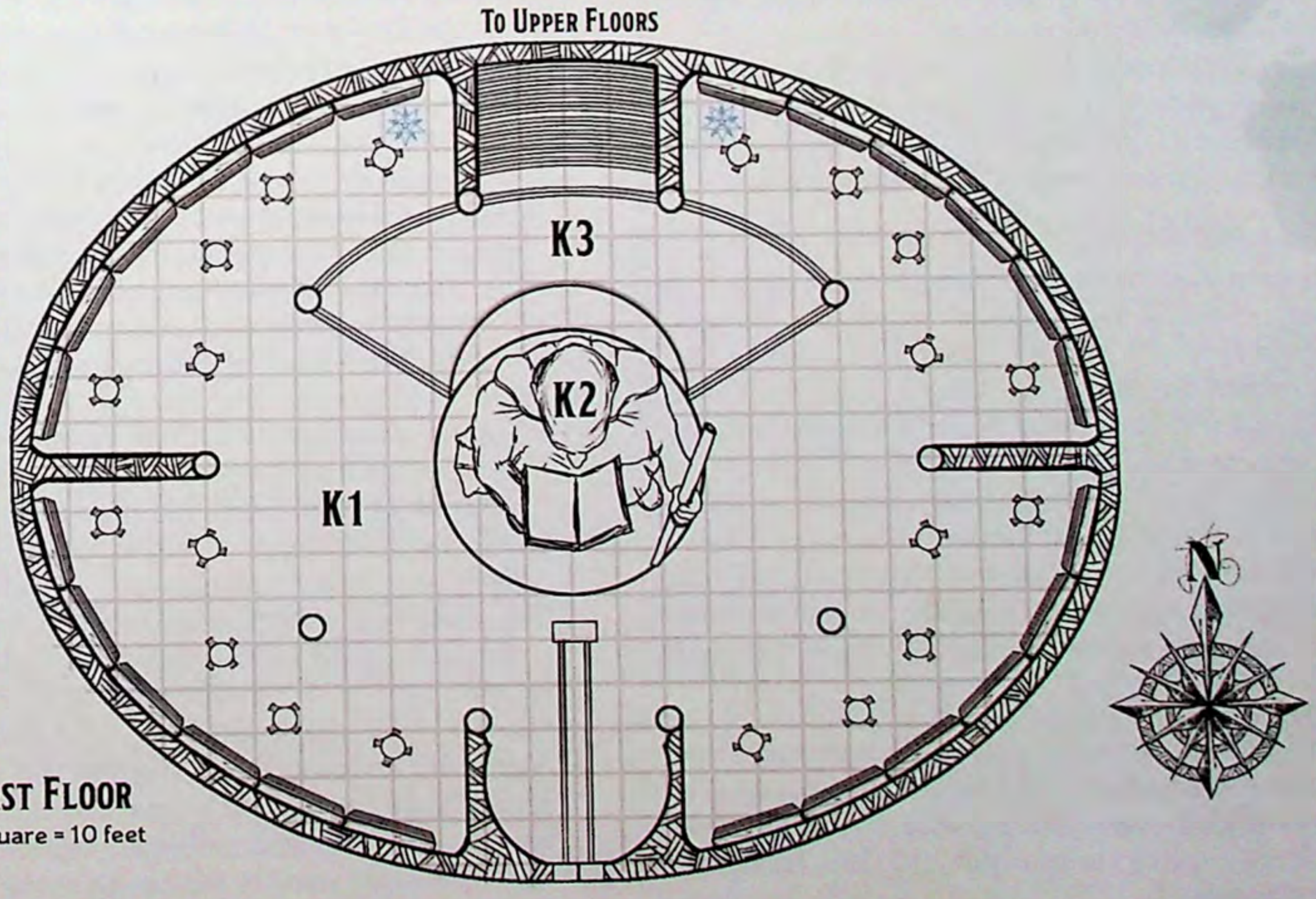
The work of preparing the hall might be plagued by accidents. Student recklessness isn't entirely to blame for these dangers—unknown to the characters, some more sinister force is at work. For every two hours the characters spend working in Kollema Hall, roll on the Kollema Hall Accidents table to determine whether an event occurs, then run the

KOLLEMA HALL


To Upper and Lower Floors
K4
K7
K6
K5

SECOND FLOOR
1 square = 10 feet

THIRD-FLOOR INFIRMARY
1 square = 5 feet


To Upper Floors
K3
K2
K1
N

FIRST FLOOR
1 square = 10 feet

SEAN MACDONALD

MAP 5.2: KOLLEMA HALL

corresponding event, which is described below the table. Events can occur more than once. At the end of this time, continue with the "Waking Nightmares" section.

KOLLEMA HALL ACCIDENTS

d10	Event
1–4	No Event
5	Archivist Attack
6	Firebreak
7	Get Me Down
8	Look Out
9–10	Sick Leave

ARCHIVIST ATTACK

In response to a dropped table or minor damage to the library shelves, two **cogwork archivists** (see chapter 7) move to attack the offending students. It's unclear why the archivists react so aggressively.

FIREBREAK

On the night of the masquerade, the hall will be lit with dozens of magical floating lights that emanate from magical firework-like devices that will be set off soon after the event begins. These tube-like devices are among the decorations being set up during the day's preparations. Choose a character and have them make a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check. On a successful check, they notice that one of the devices is faulty. On a failed check, the character doesn't spot anything amiss.

If the character fails to notice the damaged device, or notices the problem but elects to do nothing about it, a misfire occurs in the "Welcoming Announcement" section later in this chapter.

GET ME DOWN

The demonstration stage (area K3 on map 5.2) has been enchanted with magic that will allow dancers to fly above it on the night of the masquerade. However, this magic has somehow activated early, causing a student the characters know to levitate unexpectedly, stranding them 50 feet in the air, out of reach of any solid objects. The student can't move from their position while out of reach, but if they come in contact with an anchored object, they can move along it as if climbing. The student levitates for 5 minutes before the magic ends and they fall.

LOOK OUT

Someone shouts a warning as a box of heavy decorations drops from a balcony several floors up. A random character must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage.

If no character is in a place where something could fall on them, choose a character and let them notice the box about to fall on a student on the first floor. The character has an instant to try to mitigate the danger—perhaps by casting a spell or using a class feature. If they can't, the box hits the student and deals damage as described above.

SICK LEAVE

During the hall's preparation, a student complains of having a headache that's suddenly gotten worse, and they head to the third-floor infirmary. Although the characters have no way of knowing it, this student is cursed by *Murgaxor's orb* (detailed at the beginning of this adventure). When this happens, increase the number of sick students in the "Waking Nightmares" section by one. If a character escorts the student to the infirmary, Professor DeSantos doesn't find anything wrong with the student and encourages them to lie down in the sickroom (area K7 on map 5.2) until they feel better.

WAKING NIGHTMARES

As the work of preparing Kollema Hall winds down, six students complain about headaches and go to the infirmary. All these students are feeling the effects of the curse caused by *Murgaxor's orb* (detailed at the beginning of this adventure). These students should be a mix of students the characters know and don't know.

If a character goes to the infirmary with the sick students, Professor DeSantos is concerned by the sudden influx of patients but can't find anything wrong with them. She insists they rest in the sickroom until they feel better.

Ten minutes later, these six students—along with any others who came to the infirmary during the "Sick Leave" event—are back on their feet, though something is clearly wrong. The afflicted students are all suffering from the Visions of Terror effect of *Murgaxor's orb*. They're delirious and hallucinating, shouting things like "No! Stop!" and "Keep away!" Reacting violently to whatever they're seeing, they attack anyone near them as they try to escape Kollema Hall; use one or more of the college apprentice stat blocks in chapter 7 to represent them.

Any characters in the infirmary are among the first people the delirious students turn against. Characters on the hall's first and second floors who succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check hear shouting and breaking glass on the third floor. Soon after, the panicking students rush onto the second floor and seek to escape, attacking anyone who comes close, while yelling things like "Stay back, monster!" and "Help, they're trying to kill me!" The resulting scene descends into chaos as the other students either try to help or scatter in terror.

ENDING THE PANIC

A character can use an action to try to calm a delirious student, doing so with a successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check. A character who is a Friend or Beloved of the delirious student has advantage on the check. If the check fails, the student continues to panic. If the check succeeds, the student becomes docile and returns to normal after 10 minutes; the same thing happens if the student is incapacitated. Sick students who escape from Kollema Hall rampage across campus for 10 minutes before being taken into custody by university staff.

After this incident, most of the afflicted students are too scared to attend the Magister's Masquerade.

INVESTIGATING THE PANIC

A character who investigates what led to the students' mysterious behavior can make a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check. A successful check reveals that the sick students all recently visited Bow's End Tavern—they met for breakfast before the day's work started. If the characters miss this clue, a student whom a character is acquainted with shares this observation a day later.

INVESTIGATING BOW'S END

A character who visits Bow's End Tavern can ask around about the students. None of the staff remembers anything remarkable, but one of the tavern's chefs, Curtie Axechucker, was working when the students originally came in. She's also there when the characters come to investigate.

Regardless of the characters' line of questioning, the anxious Chef Curtie (chaotic neutral dwarf **commoner**) jumps to the conclusion that her food might have sickened the students. A character must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check to get useful information out of Curtie, as she works herself into a flustered state. For each successful check, Curtie offers one of the following pieces of information:

- She was the only chef on duty when the students in question came in.
- The morning meal was nothing remarkable, with waffles drizzled in Sedgemoor mushroom syrup being popular.
- Student pranksters have tried to slip psychoactive ingredients into meals in years past.
- Dean Tullus was at the tavern and spoke with the students. The dean seemed uncharacteristically friendly, chatting and shaking hands as they parted.

Curtie couldn't hear what the dean said to the students and doesn't remember anything useful beyond this. She begs the characters not to spread rumors about the tavern until it's clear what happened.

TALKING TO THE DEAN

If the characters wish to ask Dean Tullus about why she was at Bow's End Tavern, meeting with her immediately proves impossible, as the professor is busy with her classes and personal research. However, a teaching assistant can make an appointment for the characters to talk to the dean during her office hours three days after the chaos at Kollema Hall. This meeting takes place in Tullus's office in the Deans' Wing of Archaeo Memorial Hall.

Should the characters meet with Dean Tullus, they find her polite but cold. She admits she was at the tavern, but only to ensure preparations for the Magister's Masquerade were on track. She remembers seeing some of her students at the tavern but doesn't remember what they spoke about. She claims to be cordial with all her students. Characters who succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check suspect Tullus isn't being entirely truthful, but aren't sure what about. Those who succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check also notice the green orb the dean showcased during class occupying a prominent space behind her desk.

If the characters persist in their questioning, Dean Tullus brushes off any implication of impropriety and mentions that the Strixhaven administration is making its own investigation into the events at Kollema Hall—one that will scrutinize everyone who was there. She ends the meeting by telling the characters to focus on studying for their upcoming exams.

ADVANCE TO 7TH LEVEL!

Once the characters have dealt with the incident at Kollema Hall, they advance to 7th level.

ADVANCED ARCANE HISTORY EXAM: UNEARTHED ARCANA

The characters' final Exam in Advanced Arcane History takes place just two days before the masquerade and tests students' knowledge of theories about lost magical relics and devices.

STUDYING PHASE

The day before the Exam, the characters can study the course material. A character can use any ability check and skill during the Studying phase.

Once you've asked each player how their character is approaching the Studying phase, resolve that phase by having each character who studies make a DC 17 ability check. Make sure players keep track of their characters' rerolls and apply them during the Testing phase.

Testing Phase

Once again, Dean Tullus doesn't appear to administer this Exam, but her assistants are prepared and run the Exam smoothly. On the day of the Exam, each character makes two ability checks related to parts of the test:

Lost Magic Relics. Identifying famous missing magical relics requires a successful DC 19 Intelligence (Arcana) or Intelligence (History) check.

Discovery Hypotheses. Writing short essays theorizing what magic items scholars have yet to discover requires a successful DC 19 Charisma (Persuasion) check.

Have each player note their character's Exam results—how many Student Dice they gained and what skills they used during the test—on their copies of the tracking sheet.

Cheating

Dean Tullus's teaching assistants aren't as alert for cheaters as true Strixhaven professors; the DCs of the two checks is only 14.

A Starlit Night

The Magister's Masquerade occurs in the final weeks of the academic year as students' final exams conclude. The events of the ball precipitate the end of the adventure, so tie up any loose plots characters are involved in prior to starting this section or during its more free-form parts.

While the masquerade is the climax of the academic year, the adventure's final challenges take place at Archaeo Memorial Hall as the characters' investigation of Dean Tullus comes to a head. During the Masquerade, the dean uses the crowd to spread Murgaxor's curse, sowing the seeds for the villain's future magical plots. Use opportunities at the masquerade to fuel the characters' suspicions and ultimately encourage them to investigate the dean's office, as detailed in the "Midnight at Lorehold" section.

Preparing for the Masquerade

Many students spend the day of the Magister's Masquerade preparing for the event by relaxing, putting the finishing touches on their costumes, dressing, and meeting with friends so they can arrive at the event together. Nothing sinister happens to the characters during this time, but it's still a stressful period, and tensions are apt to be high. The day of the masquerade, have each character roll on the Preparation Accidents table to see how the lead-up to the event goes.

Preparation Accidents

d10	Accident
1–3	No accident. Preparations go smoothly.
4	The character learns another student is wearing the same costume as them.
5	Makeup, hair dye, or magical accessories work incorrectly, causing part of the character's appearance to have an unexpected color.
6	The character loses their *masque charm*.
7	The character's date backs out at the last moment, or they're encouraged to have someone unexpected attend the ball with them.
8	An unexpected emergency at a Job or related to an Extracurricular takes up some of the character's preparation time. This makes them 6d10 minutes late to the event.
9	The masquerade's organizers require the character to show up to the event 1d4 hours early and work for a portion of the masquerade.
10	An accident—such as a chemical spill, animal damage, or a rain of magic pigment—ruins the character's costume 1d4 hours before the event.

Arriving at the Masquerade

The Magister's Masquerade starts at dusk. Once characters have completed their preparations (or time has run out), they should head to Kollema Hall. As they arrive at Kollema Hall and step inside, read or paraphrase the following text:

> Kollema Hall has been transformed. Music, color, and laughter fill the airy space as masked and impeccably dressed students and faculty mingle. Beyond a check-in stand attended by student hosts, tables are arranged with whimsical ice sculptures and ornate refreshments. A band plays energetic music near the demonstration stage, which has been turned into a dance floor. Above it all, banners depicting Strixhaven heroes hang amid drifting lanterns glowing with soft light.

Students don't need to present their invitations to gain admittance to the masquerade, but they are expected to check in. All third-year students and their guests are admitted to the ball, so long as they're wearing appropriate attire. If a student arrives without adequate attire, a helpful student working the desk takes them to a room upstairs with a wardrobe full of musty costumes from past Prismari theatrical events. The character can use these costumes to assemble an outfit, albeit an atrocious one.

BAYARD WU

Masquerade General Features

The Magister's Masquerade is held on the first floor of Kollema Hall, which is shown on map 5.2. The tables have been moved from area K1 and replaced with a few long tables serving refreshments. During the masquerade, add the following features to those listed in the "Kollema Hall Features" section earlier in this chapter:

Crowded. During the masquerade, the first and second floors of the hall are crowded with people. These floors are difficult terrain.

Distracting. The hall is filled with music and activity. Creatures on the first and second floors have disadvantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks.

Masquerade Events

The Magister's Masquerade includes the events below; run them in the order shown. Between the events, allow opportunities for characters to socialize. Moments to mingle or dance can serve as the culmination of some Relationships or as turning points for others. Linger on opportunities to socialize as long as you and the players please, and adjust Relationship Points as necessary.

Guess Who?

When the characters arrive, they have time to socialize, take in other students' costumes, and meet up with acquaintances they recognize. While characters easily recognize each other, nearly everyone at the masquerade is wearing a magical disguise. Correctly guessing another student's identity requires a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check, regardless of whether the student wears a mundane or magical costume. A character has advantage on checks made to recognize any students they have a Relationship with.

Some characters might look for Dean Tullus during the masquerade, but they don't immediately see her. Anyone they ask about her believes the dean is present, but no one can readily point her out.

During this initial period (and later in the event), mages using the *unseen servant* spell circulate trays of food and drink throughout the hall.

Welcoming Announcement

Once all the characters have arrived and had a chance to mingle, Dean Tullus welcomes the attendees to the annual Magister's Masquerade. Read the following text to begin this event:

From spell mishaps to pigment storms, plenty could go wrong the day of the Magister's Masquerade.

> The music falls silent and a spotlight shines upon a second-floor balcony as Dean Tullus approaches the railing. The dean is unmasked and resplendent in a gown made of golden scrolls. Magic amplifies her voice, carrying it throughout the hall.
>
> "Students, faculty, honored guests of Strixhaven: welcome to the Magister's Masquerade! I know many of you have been looking forward to this night as much as I have, and I promise it will be a night to remember!"
>
> She gestures toward the massive statue in the hall's center. "Centuries ago, wise Kollema established this masquerade as a Strixhaven tradition to bring students of all our colleges together, to show the potential of our university's mission, and to create a night of magic. Tonight, we are honored by the presence of his spirit and wisdom once again, for history lives here at Strixhaven, and nothing is ever truly forgotten.
>
> "Now, you've all been promised a starlit night, so one and all, come dance among the stars!"

With Dean Tullus's final words, the tube-like devices placed during the "Preparing the Hall" event fire, scattering multicolored lights to the heights of the hall. These insubstantial magical motes hang in the air, shedding a gentle starry light.

Misfire. If a character failed to notice the faulty device in the "Firebreak" event earlier in the chapter, or noticed it but did nothing about it, the device explodes when activated. The explosion happens in the quadrant of Kollema Hall's first floor with the largest number of characters. Everyone in that quarter of the hall must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or have starry embers burn small holes into their attire. Creatures are otherwise unharmed. Guests are startled, and many are upset about what's happened to their outfits, but within 10 minutes most attendees calm down.

Dance among the Stars. As the dean finishes her speech, the magic placed on the Kollema Hall demonstration stage activates. Anyone who enters a space on or above the stage gains a fly speed equal to their walking speed. This allows the guests to literally dance on air. Anyone who leaves the space above the dance floor in midair drifts gently to an unoccupied space in area K1. This magic lasts until the end of the masquerade.

FURTHER SUSPICIONS

Use the Magister's Masquerade as an opportunity to heighten the characters' suspicions about Dean Tullus. After her welcome announcement, Dean Tullus grows distant. In the course of the evening, a character keeping an eye on the dean can make a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check. On a success, the character notices the dean engaged in one of the following strange behaviors:

- Dean Tullus moves through the crowd, letting her hand drift across the backs of those she passes.
- The dean faces a bookshelf and momentarily examines something she's holding. Green light from an unseen source illuminates her, then fades.
- Dean Tullus ignores and moves away from anyone who tries to engage her in conversation.

MASQUERADE FESTIVITIES

During the masquerade, characters can interact with every other student present. Roll on the Masquerade Developments table for each character to see which interactions occur.

MASQUERADE DEVELOPMENTS

d8	Event
1	A student approaches the character and asks them to dance. The student reveals their feelings, those of another student, or some secret to the character during the dance.
2	A character overhears a group of students planning a mean-spirited prank on another student. The character can thwart the prank, but risks having a bucket of ink being spilled on them or being targeted by a *Tasha's hideous laughter* spell.
3	A Friend of the character is clearly experiencing an altered state, perhaps due to magic, an intense calming method, or a more mundane reason. The student needs someone to watch out for them lest they embarrass themself.
4	A Rival of the character challenges them to an aerial dance-off. Whoever has the highest Charisma (Performance) check total wins.
5	The character finds a distraught student who's had their costume ruined or suffered a messy rejection.
6	A magically gifted artist is capturing rapid portraits of masquerade attendees. The character is invited to have their portrait made to remember the night.
7	If the character put a lot of thought into their costume, multiple attendees compliment their outfit. If they didn't, the comments are less flattering.
8	The character notices Dean Tullus watching them intently several times in the course of the evening.

KOLLEMA'S WISDOM

Part of the tradition of the Magister's Masquerade involves a speech made by the spirit of Magister Kollema. The statue of Kollema animates, offering wisdom to the gathered students of Strixhaven, in the final hour of the masquerade:

> At the anticipated time, the music fades, dancers drift to the floor, and the hall falls silent as lights rise to illuminate the towering statue of Magister Kollema. After a moment's stillness, the statue speaks.
>
> "Students of Strixhaven," Wise Kollema says in a voice that booms through the hall, yet echoes as if coming from afar. "Always remember the chain of which you are a part. Wisdom is shared, learned, added to, and passed on. Links are added and lost, but the chain of tradition connects us all—those of us who were, who are, and who are yet to come. You are bonded, students of Strixhaven, to one another and to those you'll never know. Never doubt the wondrousness of what you've learned or the remarkable place you hold as the link between the past and the future. This night, we are one community, knowing no boundaries of role, college, or time."
>
> The hall bursts into applause.
>
> "But be warned!" the statue of Kollema unexpectedly continues. "There is a harsh lesson you have yet to learn. When the mistakes of the past are forgotten, that dire past will return to haunt the present. Beware, mages, of the shadow that reaches for you even now."

The hall falls into silence as the voice of Kollema fades, followed by muttering and the jarringly jaunty notes of the band playing anew. Questions about Kollema's pronouncement run through the crowd. Some faculty members report that the magister's spirit often offers cryptic advice at the event, but they've never heard of anything as ominous as this.

THE MASQUERADE'S CONCLUSION

After Kollema's pronouncement, students begin slipping away. Within the next couple of hours, half the guests funnel out, heading back to their lodgings or to clandestine after-parties. Dean Tullus soon leaves as well. A character who's been watching the dean and who succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check notices her slip out, headed in the direction of Archaeo Memorial Hall.

Whether the characters follow the dean or go about their business after the masquerade, they soon stumble across an unsettling sight. Read or paraphrase the following text:

> Even considering the late hour, the walk across campus is unusually quiet. But as you round a corner, a flickering magical lantern illuminates several bewildered students standing in the path.

These three students are **Lorehold apprentices** (see chapter 7) who were ambushed by Dean Tullus. The dean used *Murgaxor's orb* to curse them with Visions of Terror (as detailed at the start of the adventure). Dean Tullus hopes to scare off the characters by placing the students in the characters' path.

The students begin panicking as the characters approach them. The scene should be familiar to anyone who faced the sick students at Kollema Hall. The students attack whichever non-cursed creature is closest to them, and they can't be calmed. During the battle, the delirious students scream things like "No! You can't take me!" but also more useful information like "This isn't the way to Archaeo Hall! What are you doing?!" A student who is either incapacitated or knocked unconscious comes to their senses when the condition ends on them.

Golden Scroll. After the battle, one of the students drops something: a piece of a golden scroll. A character who succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check recognizes this as a ripped piece of Dean Tullus's masquerade dress.

Further Investigation. Characters who go to Archaeo Memorial Hall find another scrap of dress outside the building. A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check also allows a character to notice a light flickering within the hall and a silhouette moving within.

Characters who wait for the panicked students to recover can question them. All three students say Dean Tullus requested they assist her with an errand at Archaeo Memorial Hall, but along the way a strange headache left them dazed. One of them reached out to the dean for help, snagging her dress, but she left them.

If the characters investigate any of these clues, proceed with the "Midnight at Lorehold" section.

MIDNIGHT AT LOREHOLD

Following their suspicions about Dean Tullus, the characters visit Archaeo Memorial Hall, the primary administrative building on Lorehold's campus. They know Tullus's office is in the Deans' Wing and find strangeness afoot there.

LOREHOLD DEANS' WING

The Deans' Wing occupies a potion of the first floor of Archaeo Memorial Hall. The wing consists primarily of offices and portions of Lorehold's extensive historical archives.

LOREHOLD DEANS' WING FEATURES

The following are general features of the Lorehold Deans' Wing:

Structure. The exterior walls of the Deans' Wing are heavy stone construction, while the interior walls are wood and plaster, with heavy wooden doors, except as specified otherwise.

Ceilings. Most of the Deans' Wing has 12-foot ceilings, while the records rooms (area L4) have 20-foot-high ceilings.

Illumination. Unless otherwise noted, when visited at night, areas of the Deans' Wing are unlit.

Guardian. An **invisible stalker** roams the halls of the Deans' Wing after hours, serving as a guard. Until the invisible stalker is defeated, whenever the characters enter a room, roll a d20. On a roll of 18–20, the invisible stalker is in that room. Otherwise, any significant noise the characters make attracts the invisible stalker. The creature attacks anyone they find who isn't a member of the Lorehold faculty.

LOREHOLD DEANS' WING LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to map 5.3. All descriptions assume the character explore this area at night, when the wing is largely abandoned.

L1. MAIN HALL

The double door leading into the Deans' Wing from outside is locked, but it can be opened with a successful DC 25 Dexterity check using thieves' tools.

> A double door opens onto a stately, carpeted hall hung with unlit lamps and fine portraits. There are doors to either side of the entrance, a double door in each wall halfway along the hall, and a single door at the far end.

The portraits here depict past deans of Lorehold and are invested with a measure of their spirits. Any visible creature not part of the Lorehold faculty that enters this hall after hours and proceeds more than 10 feet down the hall causes the portraits to watch the interloper and whisper.

If a character proceeds more than 20 feet down the hall without addressing the portraits, the paintings target them with disconcerting magic. Each creature in the hall that can hear the whispers must make a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 10 (3d6) psychic damage and must immediately use its reaction, if available, to move as far as its speed allows out of the Lorehold Deans' Wing. If the creature succeeds, it takes half as much damage and doesn't have to flee the area.

If a character addresses any of the portraits, one or more of them reply and insist to know the characters' business in the Deans' Wing. The portraits all have the personalities of the deans they depict and are generally stodgy and pedantic. However, characters who succeed on a DC 16 Charisma (Persuasion) check can convince the portraits that the party belongs there. The portraits won't use their magic on the characters if so convinced.

L2. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Lorehold administrative personnel use these offices to handle the various day-to-day tasks of keeping the campus running. Each office contains at least one desk and chair, along with stacks of dull paperwork and some personal tchotchkes, like a paperweight bearing the Lorehold emblem or an overdue romance novel from the Biblioplex.

L3. PORCH

> A three-foot-high stone railing surrounds this broad, paved porch, separating the space from the Lorehold campus beyond.

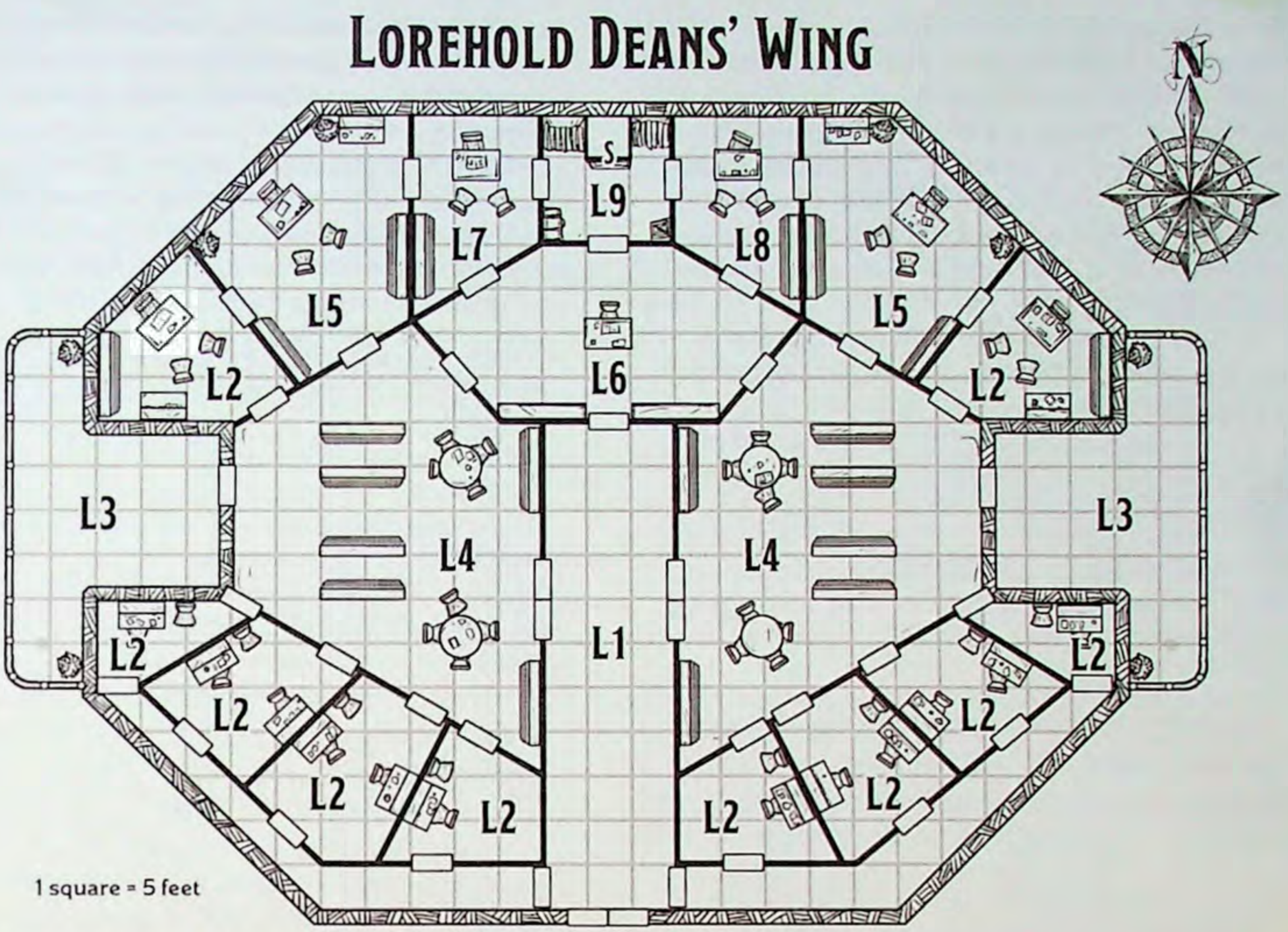
These porches are used as sitting and meal areas on the rare occasion that social events are held at the Deans' Wing. The characters can easily hop over the railings here and access the building through one of the side doors. These doors open easily from the inside, but from the outside they're locked and require a successful DC 25 Dexterity check using thieves tools to open.

Spirit Statues. Two **spirit statue mascots** (see chapter 7) stand on each of these porches. They house the spirits of departed Lorehold faculty, and they politely ask anyone who hops the railing to use the main doors during working hours. If they're ignored, the statues shout an alarm, calling the characters "trespassers" as they move to attack. This alerts the two cogwork archivists in the nearby Records Room (area L4), which remain in that area, and causes the **invisible stalker** that guards the wing to arrive in 1d4 rounds.

L4. RECORDS ROOM

> Bound volumes of Lorehold records cram this room's tall bookshelves and round tables. A double door and numerous plain doors lead from the chamber.

Two **cogwork archivists** (see chapter 7) work in each of these records rooms after hours, sorting and organizing. If they notice the characters, the archivists demand to know why they are in the



Map 5.3: Lorehold Deans' Wing

Deans' Wing after hours. If they aren't convinced by the response, they try to grapple the intruders and eject them from the building.

Research. The bookshelves here contain detailed records of Lorehold's staff, students, and curriculum going back centuries. A character who spends 10 minutes going through the records and succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers a map of the Deans' Wing. This map clearly marks that there is a hidden space behind a wall of the Deans' Records Room (area L9).

L5. Restricted Records Room

The doors to these rooms are locked, and each requires a successful DC 25 Dexterity check using thieves' tools to open. Each room contains shelves and cabinets of Lorehold records that detail the academic progress of current students. A character who spends 10 minutes searching the shelves and succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check can find any students' grades for courses they're taking in the Biblioplex or on the Lorehold Campus, like Advanced Arcane History. Altering someone's test results or final grades is a simple matter once their records are discovered. Even the sloppiest alterations aren't questioned. This doesn't, however, affect any benefits gained from Exams.

L6. Deans' Reception Room

> A simple desk faces a pair of uncomfortable-looking benches in this sparse, hexagonal reception room. Six polished wooden doors lead from the room, one in each wall.

During the day, office staff mind this desk and keep track of the deans' appointments. The desk is filled with unremarkable office supplies.

If the party has not already encountered the **invisible stalker** that serves as the wing's guardian, it's currently in this room. It waits until intruders move to leave the room, then attacks from behind.

L7. Dean Plargg's Office

A bronze nameplate on the door to this room reads "Plargg, Dean of Chaos."

> A clean desk and several stiff-looking chairs fill this austere office. Behind the desk, between various framed academic honors, hangs a mace with a spherical head.

SEAN MACDONALD

Dean Plargg, the owner of this office, shares responsibilities as Lorehold's dean with Dean Tullus. The gruff orc professor specializes in military history and is known for his perfect recall of countless battles and historic events. Beyond office supplies, books on military history (all scribed in the tactile lettering that Plargg invented), and Plargg's awards, the only thing of interest in the room is one of the dean's prized discoveries.

Treasure. Hanging behind Plargg's desk is a *mace of smiting* with a round head and a grip wrapped in thick red rope. If a character takes this item and any Lorehold faculty member sees them using it, the faculty member confiscates it and returns it to this office.

L8. Dean Tullus's Office

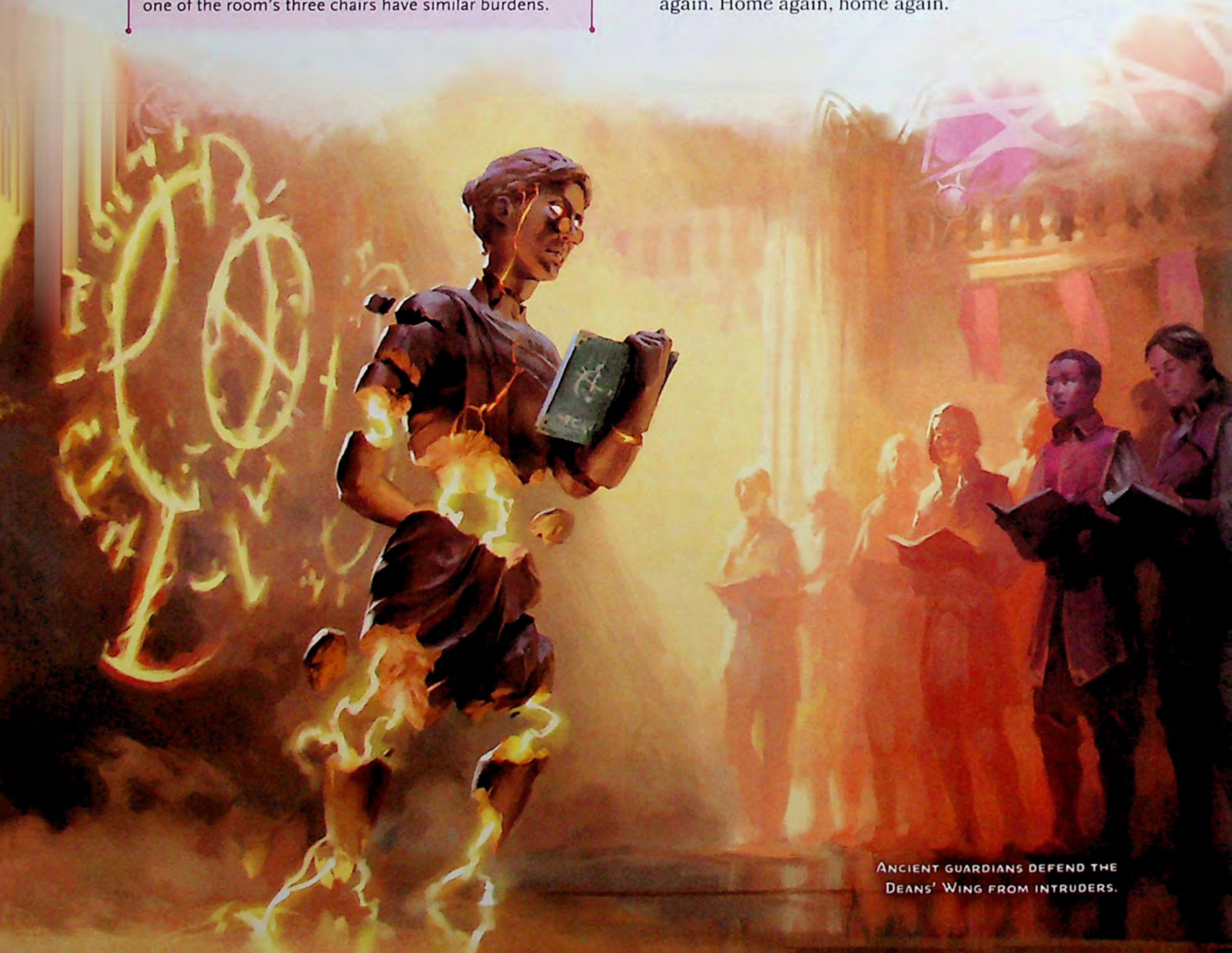
A bronze nameplate on the door to this room reads "Augusta Tullus, Dean of Order."

> The desk in this office is barely visible beneath heaps of books, papers, and knick-knacks. Every shelf and one of the room's three chairs have similar burdens.

Dean Tullus's office is messy and unoccupied. Characters who search her desk find little more than writing supples and ungraded student essays.

Expedition Records. A character who spends 10 minutes sifting through the papers in the room and succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers log entries from Dean Tullus's last expedition to the Fortress Badlands. The following notes stand out among them:

- "Discovered glass relic today. Construction unlike other badlands antiquities. Further study required."
- "Little progress today. Headache making it difficult to focus."
- "Found myself arguing with the team. Blaming headaches and lack of sleep."
- "Convinced the glass orb doesn't originate from the badlands inhabitants. More modern? Magic is strange."
- "Departing expedition early. Frustrated with team. Eager to investigate orb at Strixhaven's facilities."
- "Home again, home again. Home again, home again. Home again, home again."



Ancient guardians defend the Deans' Wing from intruders.

The final note is repeated dozens of times on the back of the log. The handwriting is also clearly not the same as Tullus's cramped script, being a heavier scrawl.

These notes provide a piecemeal record of Dean Tullus discovering *Murgaxor's orb* and suggest something unusual with Tullus's behavior.

Treasure. The curios decorating the room have historical significance but are of little value. Six of the dusty relics are worth 25 gp each, but the rest are of interest only to scholars. A character who succeeds on DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a *wand of secrets* buried under papers on a shelf.

L9. Deans' Records Room

> Ancient books and flaking scrolls fill the racks lining the walls of this musty records room. A large case stands along the wall opposite the door.

This room holds documents detailing the research of Lorehold's deans, past and present. While some of the work here contains fascinating historical discoveries, there's little of value to the characters.

Secret Door. A bookcase in the north wall disguises a secret door. Characters can find the door by examining the case and succeeding on a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check. The door is under the effects of an *alarm* spell, which alerts Dean Tullus if anyone opens it.

Deans' Repository. Anyone who opens the secret door finds a 6-foot-tall, 4-foot-wide, carved wooden frame hanging against the wall inside. Within the frame swirls dense gray fog. This frame is a portal that teleports anyone who enters to the extradimensional space called the Deans' Repository (detailed in the next section).

Facing the Dean

The final encounter with Dean Tullus and the forces manipulating her occurs in the Deans' Repository, depicted on map 5.4.

Deans' Repository

When the character enter the Deans' Repository, read:

> The portal opens into a richly decorated library filled with floor-to-ceiling shelves packed with books and archaeological relics. Four long worktables occupy the room's center, each covered with papers and dirt-encrusted stonework. Stone statues of dragons stare from between the shelves, and at the room's far end, wing-backed chairs face a crackling fireplace.

JOKUBAS UOGINTAS

The Deans' Repository is a spacious extradimensional library. The only passage leading to or from it is the portal on the wall opposite the fireplace. This portal is the duplicate of the one in area L9 of the Deans' Wing.

Confronting Dean Tullus. Dean Tullus is sitting in one of the chairs by the fireplace when the characters arrive. She's gazing into *Murgaxor's orb*, which she holds in her hands. If she notices the characters or if the characters attack her, she responds as follows:

> Her face lit by the eerie green light of the glass orb she holds, Dean Tullus says, "You shouldn't have come. Ancient ones, take them!" Four of the statues around the room respond, their eyes flaring with amber light.

The four corner statues animate and attack (use the **spirit statue mascot** stat block in chapter 7 to represent them), obeying Dean Tullus's commands. After activating them, Dean Tullus (lawful neutral human **Lorehold professor of order**; see chapter 7) joins the fray.

In the course of the battle, Tullus speaks mechanically, making threatening declarations such as "You can't stop what's coming." A character who succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check can tell the dean doesn't seem like herself.

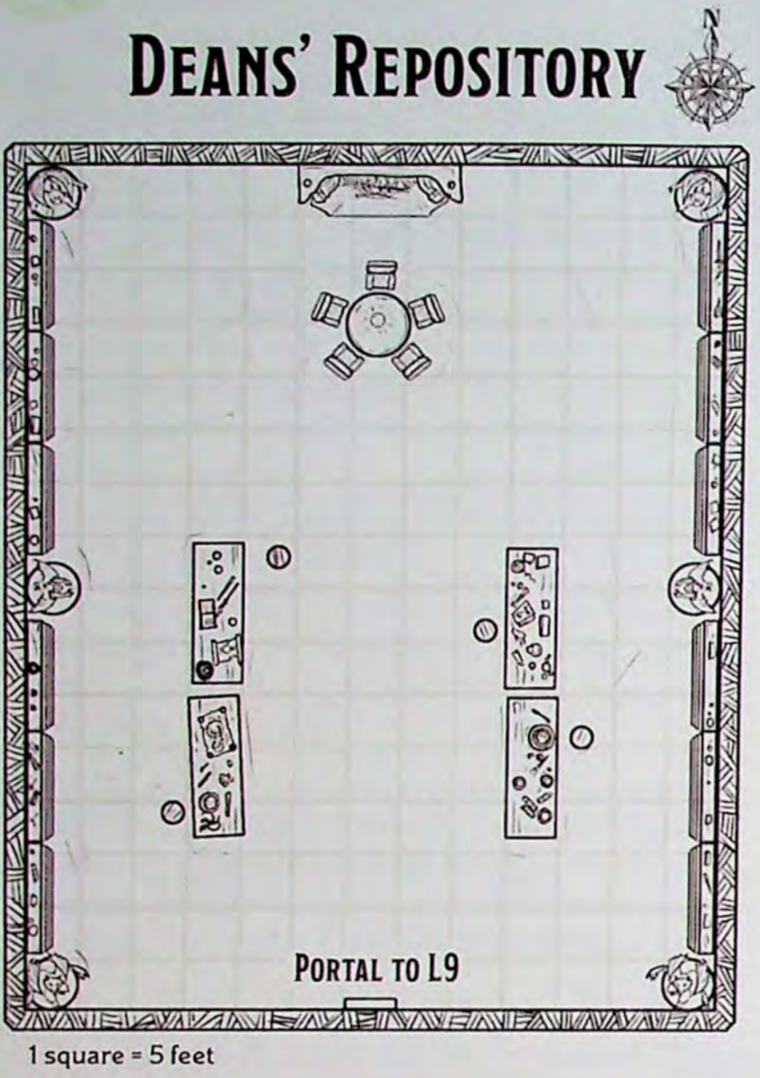
Reaching Tullus. A character who tries to reason with Dean Tullus and succeeds on a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check causes the dean to hesitate. This doesn't affect her action on any given round, but if characters succeed on making these checks on three different rounds, Tullus clutches her head and screams "No!" She then falls unconscious.

Murgaxor's Orb. Throughout the battle, Tullus clutches the green orb. The wicked mage Murgaxor controls her through this device, but separating her from the orb doesn't break Murgaxor's control. When Tullus is defeated or rendered unconscious, the orb slips from her hand, precipitating Murgaxor's appearance (see "Murgaxor Manifests").

Treasure. On the worktables lie five nonmagical historical relics from Dean Tullus's and Dean Plargg's ongoing research. These dusty objects—mostly mundane stone or jade vessels—are each worth 100 gp.

Additionally, a character who spends 10 minutes searching the library and succeeds on a DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check discovers a *Lorehold primer* (see chapter 2).

DEANS' REPOSITORY



Map 5.4: Deans' Repository

Murgaxor Manifests

When Dean Tullus is defeated, *Murgaxor's orb* flares with sickly green light and emits a blast of noxious wind. All creatures within 10 feet of the orb must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be pushed 10 feet away from the orb. Read or paraphrase the following text:

> A hazy image of a figure appears, hovering above the green, glowing orb. The ominous shape wears hooded black robes, which disguise all but the figure's warty, green hands and broad, frog-like mouth.
>
> "Worthless, pathetic meddlers!" the figure croaks. "I won't have my plans thwarted again! I'll have my vengeance on Strixhaven soon enough. You all will pay!"

This is Murgaxor, a wizard long ago expelled from Strixhaven for practicing deadly magic. He's been controlling Dean Tullus through the orb she discovered, using it to channel his magic from afar. Now that Tullus has been thwarted, Murgaxor seeks to carry out his revenge himself. Murgaxor is a bombastic foe, though. Should the characters insult or question him, he gloats about his schemes in the following ways:

Who are you? "You should already know the name Murgaxor Grenshel! It should be recorded as the name of the greatest mage Strixhaven has ever known. Instead those cowards blotted it out—struck it from the pages of history! But soon all the world will know my name!"

What do you want? "I have what I want for now. Dear Professor Tullus has served her purpose, my magic has spread across Strixhaven, and soon the rest of my plan will be a success." If the characters ask more about this, Murgaxor ignores their question.

Why are you doing this? "Vengeance! Vengeance on a scale your feeble minds could never comprehend."

So it was you controlling the dean and sickening the students? "Bah! Manipulating those pawns was only the beginning!"

Why are you targeting us? "You've confounded my plots—now for the last time!"

After some banter—or if the characters get a good insult in on him—Murgaxor shouts in frustration. In response, the image of Murgaxor vanishes and the orb cracks, releasing a threat from within.

Murgaxor Attacks

After Murgaxor's image vanishes, the cracked orb releases a cloud of mist that transforms into an entity composed of equal parts noxious wind and crackling green energy. This creature uses the **air elemental** stat block, except its Slam attack deals necrotic damage instead of bludgeoning damage. The creature fights until destroyed. When reduced to 0 hit points, the creature is drawn back into the cracked orb. The orb glows brightly for 1 minute, after which it releases another such creature with full hit points.

The orb's threat can be put to an end only by destroying the orb (see "Murgaxor's Orb" at the start of the adventure). If the orb is destroyed, any creature released from it vanishes.

Aftermath

If Dean Tullus survives her confrontation with the characters, she's free of Murgaxor's influence and grateful to these resourceful students. She covers for the characters when other faculty members ask about any strangeness (or missing possessions) in the Deans' Wing.

If Dean Tullus was killed, the masters of Strixhaven cast *raise dead* to restore her to life. She quickly realizes what transpired and keeps the characters' role in her death between her and the characters.

SEAN MACDONALD

STUDENTS FROM DIFFERENT COLLEGES WORKING TOGETHER ARE STRONGER THAN THEY WOULD BE ALONE—A LESSON OFTEN LEARNED BY YEAR'S END.

SARA WINTERS

A Threat Returns

After their encounter with Murgaxor, the characters likely realize that the evil mage has had a hand in numerous threats the characters have experienced, both during this academic year and before.

Dean Tullus makes sure the rest of the faculty knows about Murgaxor's threat to the university—a threat every professor takes seriously. Although the faculty is inclined to conceal this information from the student body for the time being (to avoid panic), the characters might learn through Dean Tullus or another professor what they couldn't learn through research: that a Strixhaven student named Murgaxor Grenshel was expelled long ago for using life-draining magic on his fellow students. Murgaxor was thought defeated, but clearly, he has somehow returned. The university staff doesn't have any more information than that, but they encourage the characters to remain wary.

If this adventure marks the end of your Strixhaven campaign, the school's administrators thank the characters for ending Murgaxor's threat and promise to destroy any remnants of the evil mage's magic.

The Year's End

The academic year soon draws to a peaceful close. Give the characters an opportunity to wrap up any remaining plans they still have, but in a scant few days classes end, the dormitories close, and the characters have a several-month-long break before the beginning of their fourth and final year at Strixhaven.

Advance to 8th Level!

With the adventure's end, each character advances to 8th level.

When the characters discover Murgaxor's deadly plan, they must spring into action.

CHAPTER 6

A RECKONING IN RUINS

AS THE FOURTH AND FINAL YEAR OF THE characters' academic career at Strixhaven dawns, the university faces a crisis. In this adventure, the characters come face-to-face with an awful truth: not only does Murgaxor Grenshel threaten the safety of everyone on campus, but the university's masters are powerless against the villain. It becomes clear that the characters must drop their studies and stop him at all costs.

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

Here's what you need to know to run the adventure in this chapter, whether you're running it as part of a campaign or as a standalone adventure.

ADVENTURE OVERVIEW

While the Strixhaven faculty investigate Murgaxor Grenshel and his schemes, it becomes clear that the villain has warded himself from their spells so student aid will be needed to defeat him. The characters are called on to help track the villain to his lair and stop his wicked ritual before he siphons the life energy from everyone on campus.

A STANDALONE ADVENTURE

If you're running this chapter's adventure as a standalone, you can summarize Murgaxor's schemes as they have unfolded over the past three years to establish him as a threat the characters must face. A former student who was expelled 200 years ago, he has artificially extended his life and seeks true immortality. He corrupted eldritch balm to cause magical mishaps, schemed to attack students at a Mage Tower game, and manipulated one of Lorehold's deans to harm students. Now his schemes threaten the entire campus.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

This adventure assumes the characters are 8th level when it begins. The Fourth-Year Level Advancement table summarizes when the characters gain levels during the adventure.

FOURTH-YEAR LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

Level	Reached When Characters ...
9th	Finish exploring the Detention Bog and retrieve the missing crates
10th	Descend into the basement of the Fortress of Caerdoon (before encountering Murgaxor)

TONY FOTI

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Use the Fourth-Year Encounters table for random encounters on campus during the adventure.

FOURTH-YEAR ENCOUNTERS

d10	Encounter
1–4	2 **bulettes**
5–6	1 **red slaad** and 1 **vrock** that escaped from their classroom bonds
7–8	1 **cloaker** that has been hiding in the rafters of an abandoned classroom building
9–10	1 **treant** that is angry the campus abuts a natural forest and is initially hostile

STUDENT SCHEDULES

Before starting this adventure, have the players choose at least three courses their characters are taking this year, either by coming up with the courses themselves or by rolling on the Fourth-Year Courses table. Inform them that the characters are also enrolled in a required course, Arcane Herbology.

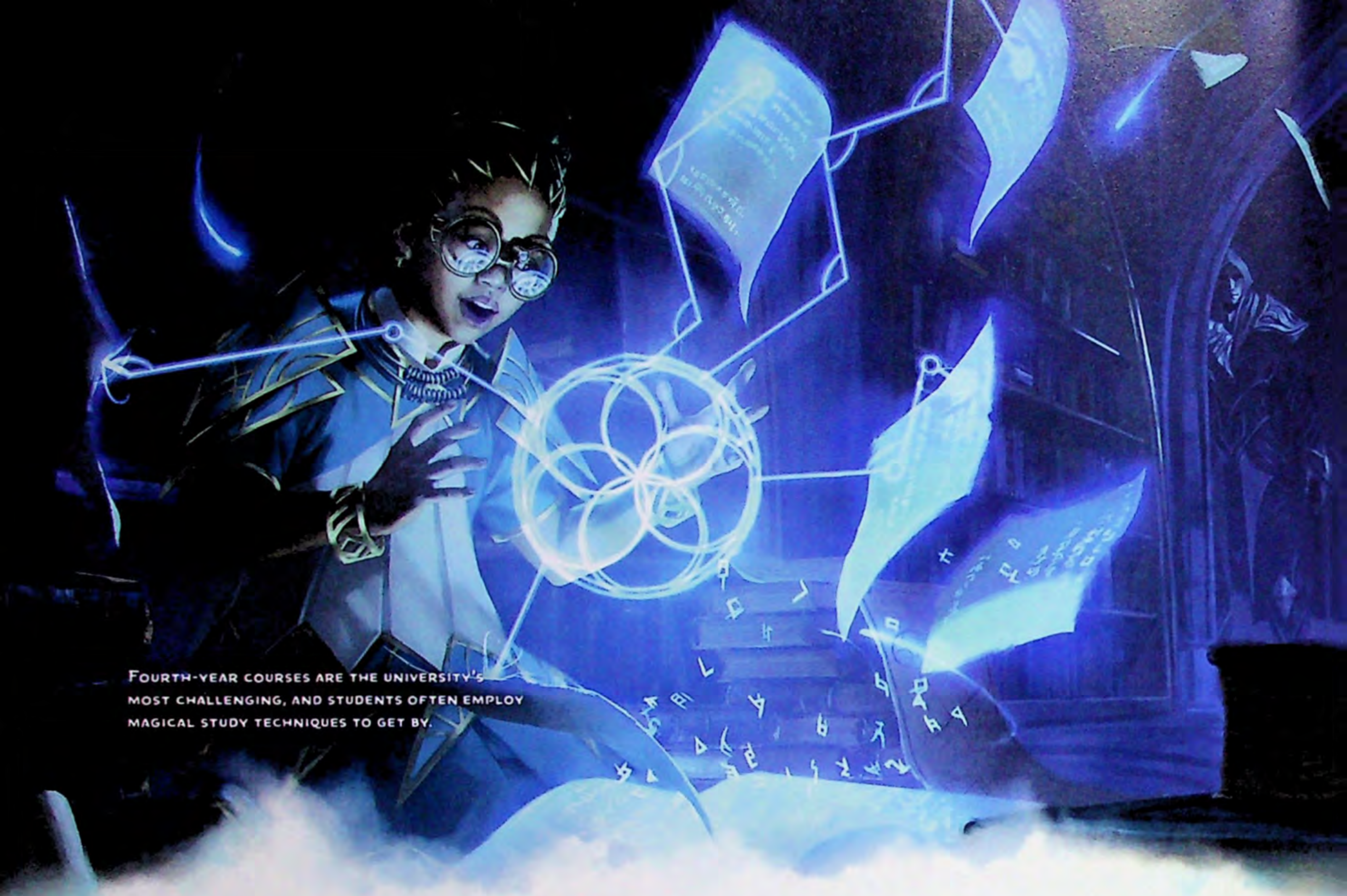
FOURTH-YEAR COURSES

d6	Course	Offered By
1	Advanced Applied Magic	General Studies
2	Advanced Lumimancy	Silverquill
3	Applied Illusory Arts	Quandrix
4	Arcane Macroeconomics	Lorehold
5	Eldritch and Arcane Performances	Prismari
6	Extraplanar Cryptozoology	Witherbloom

A SINISTER SHADOW

Once the characters have cemented their fourth-year Extracurriculars, Jobs, and Relationships decisions as needed, it's time to kick off this adventure.

When the characters arrive for their final year at Strixhaven, the mood is muted. Social spaces are sparsely populated, students chat in whispered tones, and the campus's energy is tense.



FOURTH-YEAR COURSES ARE THE UNIVERSITY'S MOST CHALLENGING, AND STUDENTS OFTEN EMPLOY MAGICAL STUDY TECHNIQUES TO GET BY.

LIE SETIAWAN

Read or paraphrase the following when you're ready to begin the adventure:

> All of your hard work has come down to this—your fourth and final year as a student of magic at Strixhaven University. But as soon as you arrive on campus, it's clear that something is very wrong.
>
> Instead of the usual cheerful bustle, students mill about campus nervously. Here and there, you hear frightened whispers: "I heard his name is Murgaxor. I heard he wants to hurt us all."
>
> The rumor mill has apparently discovered the grave events that happened last academic term.

At this point, the characters might be waiting on the faculty to discover more about Murgaxor's plans. However, they also might want to take this investigation into their own hands. If they do, run the "Clue in the Bayou" section as this adventure's first event.

A BRIEF DISTRACTION

While the characters wait to learn more about Murgaxor, they discover some of their fellow students engaged in a game at Firejolt Café (see map 3.2 in chapter 3) on the central campus. One of the characters' Friends or Rivals is part of this scene, or you may choose another student from the "Fellow Students" section of chapter 3.

When you're ready to begin the scene, read or paraphrase the following, altering the text to incorporate the name of the chosen student:

> The mood on campus might be gloomy, but as you cross the central campus, you see a few of your classmates smiling and gesturing outside Firejolt Café.
>
> A familiar face jogs up to you, waving and smiling in relief. "It's so good to see you! Things have been dire around here lately, but some friends are inside about to start playing a game they call Scufflecup. Apparently, they found a box of animated teacups, and they figured out how to control the little buggers! Come on, let's go check it out!"

SCUFFLECUP TEACUP

Tiny Construct, Unaligned

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 5 (2d4)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
4 (−3)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	3 (−4)	3 (−4)	1 (−5)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities blinded, exhaustion, poisoned
Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 6
Languages —
Challenge 0 (0 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d3 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

SCUFFLECUP

Scufflecup is a game students created after finding a box of teacups in a nearby building's storage room. The students discovered that pouring hot tea into the cups animates them for 10 minutes and causes them to sprout little arms and legs. While animate, a cup uses the **Scufflecup teacup** stat block and does the bidding of whoever animated it.

Characters who enter Firejolt Café find that the fireside lounge (area F5 on map 3.2 in chapter 3) has been rearranged into a play area for a game of Scufflecup. A student explains the game, which is played on the large table in the lounge's center. The square tabletop is 5 feet on each side. The student who describes how to play is a character's Friend, Rival, or Beloved, although you could choose anyone from the "Fellow Students" section in chapter 3.

SCUFFLECUP RULES

Each participant fills a teacup with hot tea and places it on the table. The participants then roll initiative. At least one Scufflecup participant is a student who isn't a player character.

On each of their turns, a participant can use a bonus action to mentally command their teacup either to attack another teacup within range or to try to shove another teacup off the table, using the rules for shoving in the *Player's Handbook*. A participant loses the game if their teacup drops to 0 hit points or if their teacup falls off the table.

The participant with the last cup standing wins. The winner receives a purse of donations from the crowd that totals 1,000 gp.

CHEERING AND HECKLING

A character who doesn't want to participate in the game can contribute in one of the following ways:

Cheer a Participant. A character can encourage one of the game's participants. That participant's teacup gains advantage on its attack rolls.

Heckle a Participant. A character can taunt one of the game's participants. That participant's teacup has disadvantage on its attack rolls.

RELATIONSHIP ENCOUNTER

If there are students with whom the characters wish to earn Relationship Points, treat the Scufflecup game as a Relationship encounter using the rules in chapter 3. Have players note the results of this encounter on their copies of the tracking sheet.

ARCANE HERBOLOGY EXAM: VEGETATION IDENTIFICATION

The rules used for Exams can be found in chapter 3. The first Exam for Arcane Herbology takes place shortly after the characters' Scufflecup game in Firejolt Café. Students must identify unlabeled groupings of different plants, lichens, and fungi. Like the course itself, this Exam is conducted in an outdoor lab located in Sedgemoor (see map 3.6 and its accompanying description in chapter 3).

Arcane Herbology covers techniques for using flora in potions, spells, and rituals. The course's professor is Verelda Lang (chaotic neutral **dryad**; see chapter 7), an arcano-biologist whom the characters might recall from their first year of instruction.

STUDYING PHASE

The day before the Exam, the characters can study the course material. A character can use any ability check and skill during the Studying phase.

Once you've asked each player how their character is approaching the Studying phase, resolve that phase by having each character who studies make a DC 20 ability check. Make sure players keep track of their characters' rerolls and apply them during the Testing phase.

TESTING PHASE

On the day of the Exam, each character makes two ability checks related to parts of the test:

Flora's Arcane Properties. Correctly selecting the properties of samples requires a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Nature) check.

Specimen Identification. Recalling the correct names of flora with arcane uses based on sight, smell, and texture requires a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Survival) check.

Have each player note their character's Exam results—how many Student Dice they gained and what skills they used during the test—on their copies of the tracking sheet.

CLUE IN THE BAYOU

At the end of the characters' first Exam in Professor Lang's class, she takes them aside with a grave look on her face. She waits for the other students to leave the room before she addresses the characters:

> "It is as we feared. Murgaxor has been lurking around campus ever since he dared to manipulate Dean Tullus. We still don't know his plans, but we've traced his most recent activity to the Detention Bog.
>
> "Our best faculty researchers are digging through Strixhaven's past, but we could use your help searching for clues. I've arranged for you to oversee tomorrow's Detention Bog activities. Needless to say, there's extra credit in it for you if you'll help us once again."

Once the characters have finished talking with Professor Lang, they're free to do as they please until it's time for their shift as detention monitors.

DETENTION MONITORS

The characters are tasked with mentoring a group of misbehaving students for the day. Map 6.1 shows the Detention Bog, where this part of the adventure takes place.

The faculty member in charge during detention is a Prismari instructor named Arkin Minexes (lawful good orc **Prismari professor of expression**, except he casts *Tenser's floating disk* instead of *fog cloud*; see chapter 7). Instructor Minexes is a recent addition to the faculty who is enthusiastic about learning and team-building.

Earlier in the week, a load of supply crates failed to arrive at a storage area on Witherbloom's campus when a hydra attacked the ruin grinders (described in chapter 7) that were hauling the cargo. The ruin

IDYLLIC HUTS DOT THE BAYOU SURROUNDING WITHERBLOOM COLLEGE'S CAMPUS.

grinders are now malfunctioning and wandering the bayou confusedly. The cargo they hauled is scattered about. Instructor Minexes has tasked the students in detention with retrieving the cargo and bringing it to dry land.

Ten students are scheduled to serve detention during the characters' shift. The characters can easily find out these students' identities beforehand from Professor Lang (see "Students in Detention"). The students in detention are already there when the characters arrive for their shift.

The Instructor's Secret. In reviewing the cargo manifest, Instructor Minexes noted one of the crates contained chemical substances that, unless recovered quickly and stored properly, could become unstable. Unwilling to frighten the students, the instructor keeps this information quiet for now.

Additionally, the instructor is aware of the characters' assignment from Professor Lang. He won't discuss it in earshot of the other students, but if the characters have questions for him, he happily discusses the matter with them in private. Instructor Minexes doesn't have any new information to share about Murgaxor.

When the characters arrive, read or paraphrase the following:

> The smell of putrefaction overwhelms your senses. Ahead, a knot of sullen students and one faculty member stand on a wide wooden pathway over the reeking muck. Grinning, the orc faculty member carries a satchel brimming with scrolls.

A number of students equal to the number of characters are serving detention; you can roll on the Students in Detention table (rerolling any repeated results) to identify them, or you can select ones who suit your game. Instructor Minexes, wants to see everyone learn the value of teamwork during detention. After introducing himself and welcoming everyone to the Detention Bog, he continues:

> "I am so pleased to have you all here with me today! This is an opportunity for all of us to learn more about ourselves, our fellow students, and the amazing world around us. Today we'll be heading out into the bog to recover some lost supplies and return them to dry land."

Once he finishes his welcome, the instructor pairs each character with a student. He gives each pair of students a *spell scroll* of *Tenser's floating disk*. If no one in detention can read the scroll, the instructor does so for each pair.

PIOTR DURA

Neither Instructor Minexes nor Professor Lang is aware of the hydra attack that caused the supply run to go awry. If the characters inquire how the crates came to be lost, Minexes guesses that the ruin grinders used to haul the supplies malfunctioned. If the characters are amenable, the instructor would appreciate them finding and repairing the ruin grinders, although they don't need to complete that task today.

STUDENTS IN DETENTION

As detention monitors, each character must spend the rest of the day supervising students who are being punished for their recent misbehavior. Use the Students in Detention table to determine each student and their detention-worthy offense. For more information about these characters, see the "Fellow Students" section in chapter 3.

Should it become necessary, each student in the table uses the appropriate pledgemage stat block for the student's college (see chapter 7).

STUDENTS IN DETENTION

d10	Student (College)	Offense
1	Quentillius A. Melentor III (Prismari)	Released pest mascots in Widdershins Hall
2	Rosie Wuzfeddlims (Lorehold)	Accidentally triggered a protective spell on a book that caused another student to be banished to an extradimensional space for a short time
3	Grayson Wildemere (Silverquill)	Defaced a rival student's dorm room with magical ink
4	Bhedum "Rampart" Sooviij (Lorehold)	Caused another student to fall through an open, magically hidden trapdoor as a prank
5	Cadoras Damellawar (Quandrix)	Summoned a storm in the dining hall
6	Aurora Luna Wynterstarr (Witherbloom)	Insulted a classmate, refused to apologize, and then insulted the classmate again
7	Zanther Bowen (Prismari)	Reprogrammed a janitorial golem to clean his dorm, with disastrous results
8	Larine Arneza (Quandrix)	Accidentally unleashed a water weird during a swim meet
9	Melwythorne (Witherbloom)	Started an unauthorized mascot-breeding program
10	Tilana Kapule (Quandrix)	Sneaked into a temporarily closed portion of the Biblioplex to study

THE DETENTION BOG

Located at the outskirts of Sedgemoor on Witherbloom's campus, the Detention Bog reeks of mud and fetid water. Here, students perform useful tasks as punishment for misbehavior—typically, collecting specimens of rare flora and fauna for use in spells, unguents, and potions. It's unpleasant work in an unpleasant place.

SEARCHING FOR SUPPLIES

The characters and students in detention must search for supplies as described below.

Objective. Instructor Minexes directs the students to look for the lost supplies in the area shown on map 6.1. The characters and their charges must find the six lost crates in areas D1–D6 on map 6.1 and bring them all to the trail in the map's northwest corner, where Instructor Minexes waits for the students to complete their task. A trail near this rendezvous point leads to a more solid section of Witherbloom's campus.

Crates. Each crate is a sealed, steel box weighing about 150 pounds. Also, each crate has AC 19; 33 hit points; and immunity to fire, poison, and psychic damage. Finally, each is secured with a locking mechanism that requires a successful DC 18 Dexterity check with thieves' tools to unlock. Instructor Minexes carries a master key that unlocks each crate. They all contain spell components. The unstable cargo Instructor Minexes is worried about is in area D6; see that area for more information.

Murgaxor's Influence. When the characters examine any of the crates except for the empty crate in area D5, they get an unsettling feeling. *Detect magic* reveals latent, sinister magic in the air, as well as a strange sense of magically generated protection.

The characters can deduce that this magical signature belongs to Murgaxor, who must have contaminated all of these supplies. If the players don't figure it out on their own, a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that Murgaxor has cloaked himself with magical protection, but only from something very specific. It's possible that he has protected himself from the spells of specific spellcasters, although it isn't clear yet who.

Spell Scrolls. The instructor has brought a number of *spell scrolls* of *Tenser's floating disk* equal to twice the number of pairs of students. Either the instructor or a character must read each scroll and cast its spell, which must be used to transport the crates to the northwest corner of the map. If the task takes longer than the duration of two scrolls (2 hours), the characters must figure out how to move the crates on their own.

DETENTION BOG FEATURES

The Detention Bog is a muggy place with the following features:

Endless Muck. The muddy, stagnant water is 2 feet deep unless otherwise specified and counts as difficult terrain. The small islands of land and pathways shown on the map are normal terrain.

Poor Visibility. Pervasive mist and drizzle reduce visibility to 30 feet.

Teeming Creatures. The bog is filled with animal life, much of it noisy and distracting. Wisdom (Perception) checks are thus made with disadvantage in the bog.

DETENTION BOG LOCATIONS

The following sections are keyed to map 6.1. The characters begin on the island in the southeast corner of the map.

D1. THE STICKIEST CRATE

> A trail of smooth stones just large enough for a person to walk on extends fifty feet between two large landmasses. Just off the center of the trail rests a sealed metal crate in the muck. The crate has a cracked corner seam that oozes a tar-like substance into the filthy water.

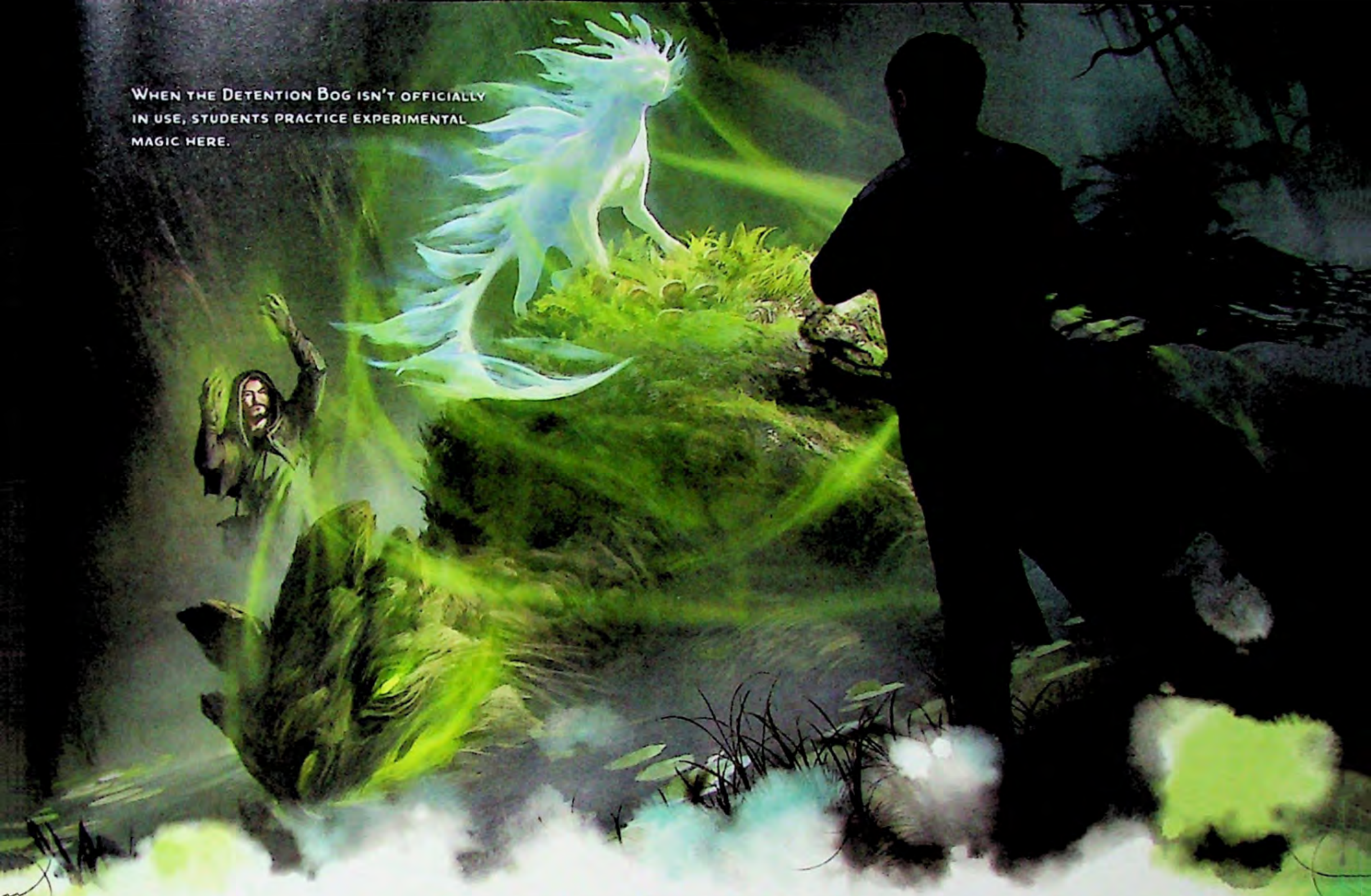
Characters who examine the crate from a distance of 5 feet or less can, with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check, discern that the goop leaking from the crate is used to soften planar bonds, thus making summoning easier. The crack can be easily sealed with *mending* or similar magic.

Crate of Planar Unguent. If scraped off the crate into a vial of some sort, the goop can be used to enhance any spell that summons one or more creatures, treating that spell as though it were cast 1 level higher. There's enough unguent leaking off the crate for one use.

D2. ANGRY TRUDGES

> A battered crate sits forlornly in the middle of an expanse of mud. Just south of the crate, water burbles from two slimy mounds of dense vegetation, accompanied by muffled rumbling.

Two **brackish trudges** (see chapter 7) were drawn to this crate, attracted by the euphoria-inducing herbal concoction within. They are possessive of the crate and attack any who come near it.



When the Detention Bog isn't officially in use, students practice experimental magic here.

JASON KANG

Retrieving the Crate. To retrieve the crate, the characters must distract, kill, or incapacitate the brackish trudges. Due to their euphoria, the trudges are only semi-aware of their surroundings, so any Dexterity (Stealth) check made to hide from them has advantage.

D3. Lonely Crate

> At the far end of a broken bridge is a mound of earth barely large enough for one person to stand on. A dented metal crate is partially embedded in the mound.

One of the malfunctioning ruin grinders hurled this crate to its current resting place when the hydra that's now in area D5 attacked. A character who examines the broken bridge and succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check identifies large bite marks in the wood. Once this evidence is found, a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Nature) check confirms that a Huge reptile smashed and bit into the wood.

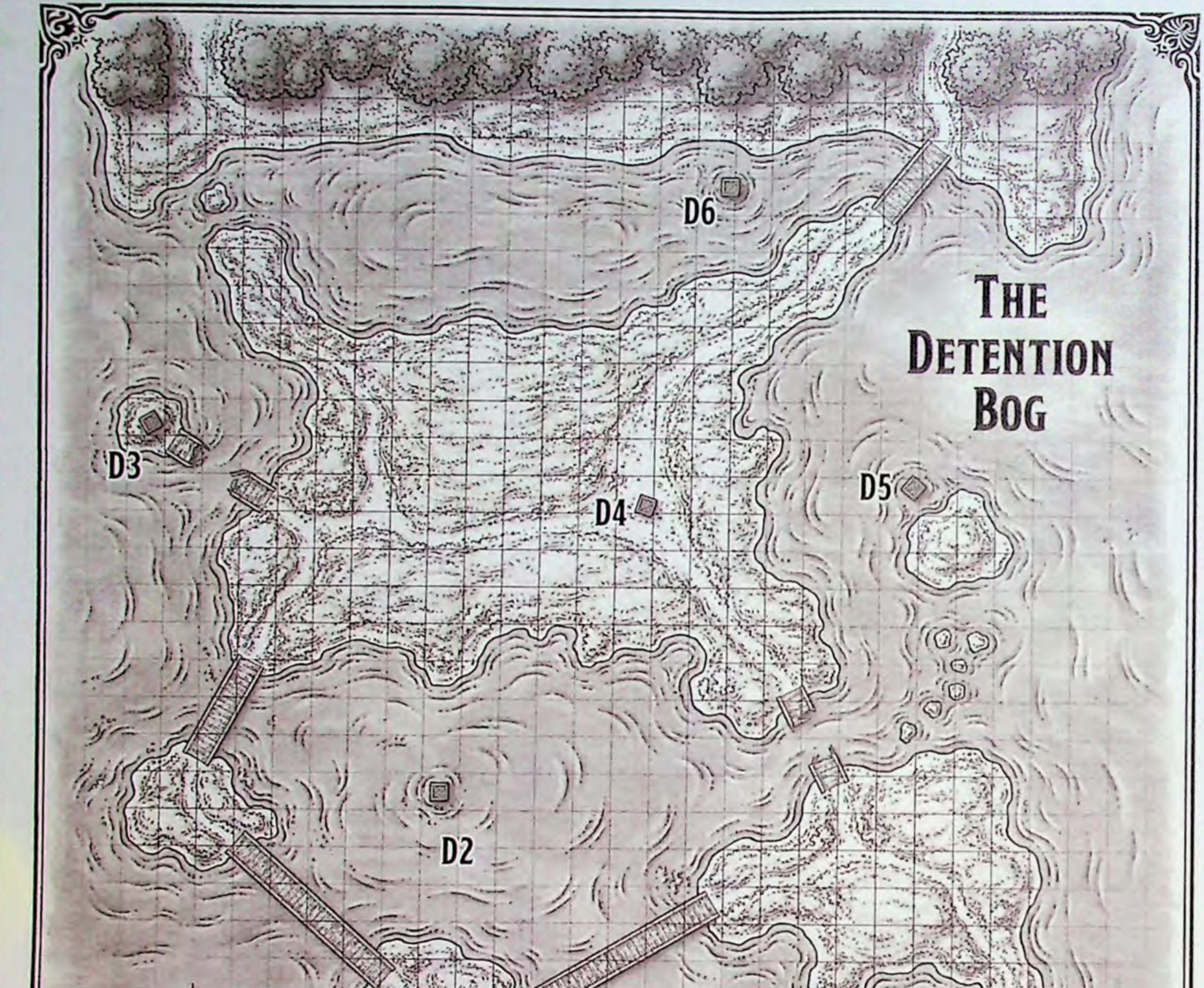
D4. Confused Constructs

> The ground here is spongy and carpeted in soft green grasses. Heavy footfalls and shrieks of grinding metal emanate from the mists. A muddy steel crate rests amid the greenery.

Two **ruin grinders** (see chapter 7) wander this island, unable to continue their assigned task of moving cargo. The ruin grinders aren't hostile and attack only in self-defense.

Before it can be used to move cargo again, a ruin grinder needs to be recalibrated. A character within reach of a ruin grinder can use an action to recalibrate it by first succeeding on a DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check and then expending a spell slot of 1st level or higher to reset the ruin grinder's arcane matrix. If the check fails, the ruin grinder shuts down for 24 hours. A recalibrated ruin grinder can carry up to 300 pounds, meaning it can carry two crates at a time to the map's northwest corner, if the characters wish.

Crate of Incense. The crate found here holds incense used in summoning and controlling air elementals.


THE DETENTION BOG
D1
D2
D3
D4
D5
D6
N
W
E
S
1 square = 5 feet

Map 6.1: The Detention Bog

MIKE SCHLEY

D5. Empty Crate

This crate is torn open on one side and filled with muddy water. A character who examines the crate can, with a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check, conclude that a big creature with powerful jaws and sharp teeth tore the crate open.

Enter the Hydra. When the characters reach the broken crate, read or paraphrase the following:

> You hear the sound of snapping trees and guttural, sibilant rasping. A moment later, a cacophonous, multi-throated roar erupts.

The **hydra** enters from the northeast corner of the map, closest to area D6, and starts moving toward the closest noises it can hear.

The dim-witted creature is addled by the magical substances it ingested after attacking the supply train. When the hydra attacks a character, that character can use their reaction to trick the hydra by making a DC 14 Charisma (Deception) or Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. On a success, the hydra attacks an object or another creature within 5 feet of its original target (such as the broken crate or a stepping stone). The hydra fights until slain or until there are no creatures it can see or hear.

D6. Unstable Crate

> A steel crate, its surface glowing orange, rests amid a pool of bubbling, hissing water.

This is the crate that concerns Instructor Minexes the most, although the characters are likely unaware of this fact. Several flasks inside the crate broke during the initial hydra attack, and their reagents intermingled. The resulting admixture is in danger of exploding.

A character who succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check can ascertain that the orange glow around the crate is a bad sign, for it suggests the crate's contents might have been damaged in a dangerous way. The crate explodes if it is moved or jostled. If the characters leave the crate alone after they see it, the crate explodes 10 minutes later. When the crate explodes, creatures within 30 feet of it must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 42 (12d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Dealing with the Crate. A character who realizes the crate's orange glow is a bad sign can gently shake the crate to rearrange its contents, lessening the explosion to 5 feet. This requires an action and a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check. If the crate is covered with at least 10 feet of earth, the damage is halved, and Dexterity saving throws made to resist the effect are made with advantage. If the characters find other creative ways of dealing with the problem that make sense, run with it.

Developments

When the characters rendezvous with Instructor Minexes in the northwest corner of the bog, he asks if anything about the crates seems strange. Regardless of what the characters report, he shows concern and replies, "I'll report this to the faculty, and we'll put our heads together. It's very likely we'll ask to speak with you all again soon."

Treasure. To further thank the characters, Instructor Minexes allows them to take 5 uses of planar unguent from the crate in area D1, assuming that this crate is among those recovered from the bog.

Advance to 9th Level!

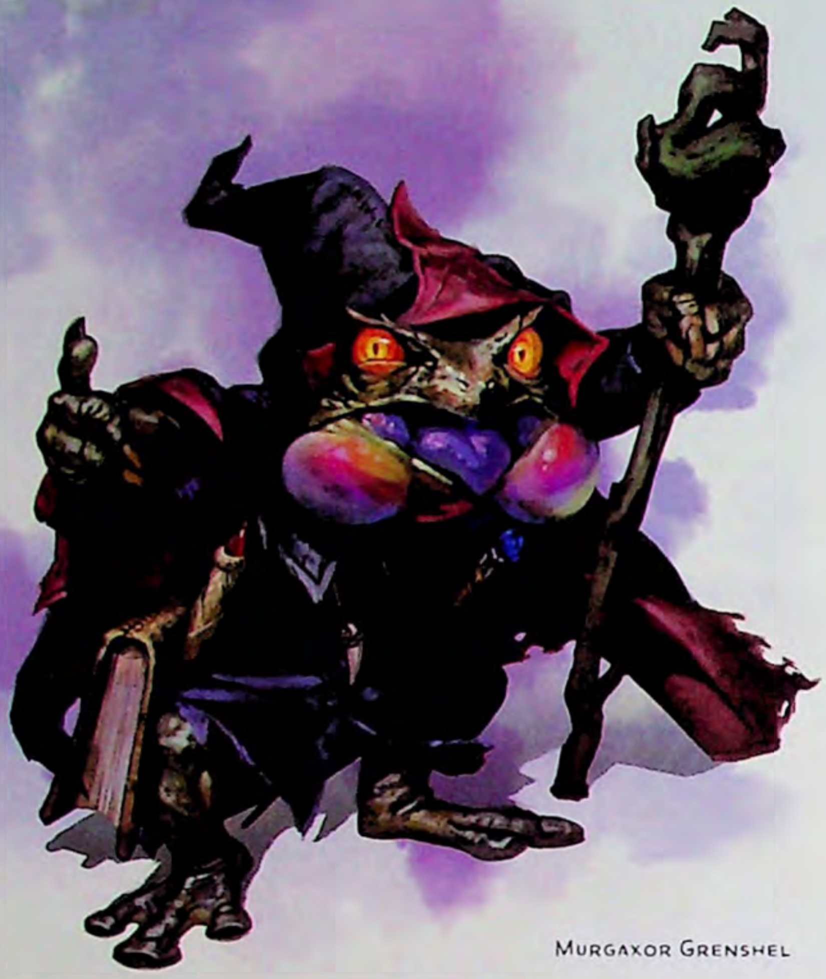
Once the characters have explored the Detention Bog and dealt with the lost supply crates, they advance to 9th level.

No Time to Lose

The day after the characters' time in the Detention Bog, they're summoned to a meeting with Professor Verelda Lang in the Biblioplex's book gardens. (Map 3.1 and chapter 3 provide a full description of the Biblioplex.)

When the characters arrive, Professor Lang says:

> "It's far more terrible than we thought. The crates you found have been tampered with. We have evidence of a strange magical signature left behind by the culprit. We now believe Murgaxor Grenshel is responsible, but he has hidden himself from all known forms of divination magic. It's clear that Murgaxor has enacted a protection ritual against all spells and effects cast against him by a faculty member.
>
> "It gets worse. Murgaxor's influence over Dean Tullus coerced her into tainting the spell components, food, and drinks of nearly everyone on campus last year. Anyone who came in contact with these are now threatened by the ritual Murgaxor is conducting."
>
> "Once complete, this ritual will drain the life energy out of everyone affected. Some will die. Others may not. Either way, we believe that the ritual will transfer that energy to Murgaxor, making him immortal.
>
> "Murgaxor's plan is clear now, and we faculty members are powerless against him. But you're not."



Murgaxor Grenshel

At this point, the characters should realize that they're Strixhaven's only hope to stop this terrible plan. They must face Murgaxor—if for no other reason than the characters carry the evil mage's corruption, and they're likely to be gravely injured or die once he completes his ritual.

But What about Classes?

Professor Lang tells the characters the faculty have agreed that stopping Murgaxor is the highest priority. As such, the characters are excused from all further Exams for the rest of the academic year. As long as they make a valiant effort to stop Murgaxor, they'll graduate with honors.

Grant the players two Student Dice to use during the remainder of this adventure. These Student Dice can be applied to Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Nature) checks. The players' tracking sheets provide a way to track these dice.

The Stage Is Set

The characters must find where Murgaxor is conducting his life-draining ritual and stop it before its completion. Given that Dean Tullus found *Murgaxor's orb* in the Fortress Badlands just off campus, that's the best place for the characters to start their search for Murgaxor's hideout.

About Murgaxor

After giving the characters their quest, Professor Lang hands them a file with information the faculty members have collected about Murgaxor from university records. Tell the players the following to give them context about this evil spellcaster:

- Murgaxor is a bullywug who attended Strixhaven 200 years ago. He was a member of Witherbloom College, though there are no records of him participating in any activities or working on campus.
- A mean-spirited, egotistical spellcaster, Murgaxor was censured repeatedly for disregarding safety protocols, hexing and cursing peers, and using harmful magic while on campus.
- University officials believe Murgaxor began his illicit experiments with life-draining magic shortly after he enrolled as a student.
- In his third year, Murgaxor was expelled for using life-draining magic when it resulted in another student's death. Murgaxor fled before he could be handed over to authorities.
- For a few years after his expulsion, Murgaxor was reportedly sighted around the outskirts of campus, specifically in Sedgemoor and the Detention Bog. Authorities believed something about those locations enhanced his magic, but he was never caught. Sightings soon stopped, and no further evidence of Murgaxor's presence was found. Officials assumed he was dead and struck Murgaxor from Strixhaven's records, as they considered him a blot on the university's reputation.

Into the Badlands

Once the characters are ready to venture into the Fortress Badlands, Professor Lang (or another faculty member of your choice) provides directions but warns the characters that this location might be dangerous. Although Dean Tullus didn't run into any problems there, it's likely that Murgaxor led her to the orb and removed any threats that might impede his plan to manipulate her.

Indeed, the Fortress Badlands have become a haven for acolytes of Murgaxor's teachings and their thralls. As the faculty suspects, the badlands contain information that can lead the characters to Murgaxor's location. However, the party must first bypass or defeat the current residents.

Approaching the Badlands

When the characters arrive at the Fortress Badlands, located 20 miles off campus, read or paraphrase the following:

Olga Drebas

> Jutting from the cracked earth ahead of you is a network of reddish sandstone hillocks. What little vegetation exists here is blackened and wilting. Three wooden guard towers flank a trail that leads through the hills. Each tower sports a knotted line of glistening rope ascending twenty feet to a broad, winged kite.

Characters approaching from the south get a clear look at the watchtowers (shown on map 6.2). The smaller, central tower has a lone, unmoving sentry. Characters who observe the towers through a spyglass or succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check note that the "sentry" appears to be a mannequin wearing a broad-brimmed sun hat. The kites and sentry are detailed in area T1.

A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) or (Nature) check reveals that the local vegetation is afflicted by a magical malady. Murgaxor has a shrine in his underground lair that corrupts the local flora; defeating Murgaxor's ritual ends this corruption.

Fortress Badlands Locations

The following locations are keyed to map 6.2.

Unless noted otherwise, entryways and ceilings in the caves are 10 feet high, and the caves are lit by *continual flame* spells cast on wall sconces.

T1. Watchtowers

Three of these rickety structures stand in a line running west to east, and each is 20 feet tall.

Sentry. The sentry posted in the smaller, central tower is a **spectator** perched atop a mannequin. The spectator's eye stalks are hidden by a sun hat. The blood mage Y'demi summoned the spectator as a guardian after she grew weary of lazy Humanoid lackeys. (For more information about Y'demi, see area U4 of map 6.3.)

When alerted to intruders or danger, the spectator detaches from the mannequin while telepathically warning intruders to leave immediately or face annihilation. Creatures that don't comply are attacked.

Kites. The three kites are hideous amalgamations of flesh and bone that serve as aerial defenders. As a bonus action, Y'demi or the spectator can make the kites attack intruders. Damaging an inert kite also activates it, as does attacking the line of entrails that attaches the kite to its watchtower. When a kite activates, its entrails detach from the watchtower and slither up into the creature's body. The kite then attacks until destroyed or called off by Y'demi. Each kites uses the **peryton** stat block.

T2. Collapsing Cave

> Gentle, white light emanates from within the mouth of this cave. The mouth is fifteen feet across and ten feet high, but the cave narrows as it deepens.

The northeastern alcove of this cave holds Murgaxor's old collection of brined and preserved lab specimens from his decades researching life and death. If any creature other than Murgaxor moves more than 10 feet into the cave, a defensive sigil detonates on the ceiling, causing a cave-in. A character who moves 5 feet into the cave can detect this sigil with a successful DC 17 Perception (Wisdom) check, and they can disable it with a successful DC 17 Intelligence (Arcana) check or a successful DC 17 Dexterity check using thieves' tools. Failing the check by 5 or more causes the sigil to detonate.

If the sigil detonates, each creature in the cave must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 18 (4d8) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone and restrained by debris. On a successful saving throw, they take half as much damage and aren't knocked prone or restrained. A creature can use an action to try to pull itself or another creature it can reach out of the debris, doing so with a successful DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check. A creature freed from the debris is no longer restrained by it. The cave-in destroys Murgaxor's collection of lab specimens.

Secret Door. A character who searches the northernmost wall of the cave and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a door disguised to blend in with the surrounding stone. This 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall stone door swings into a small, secret chamber.

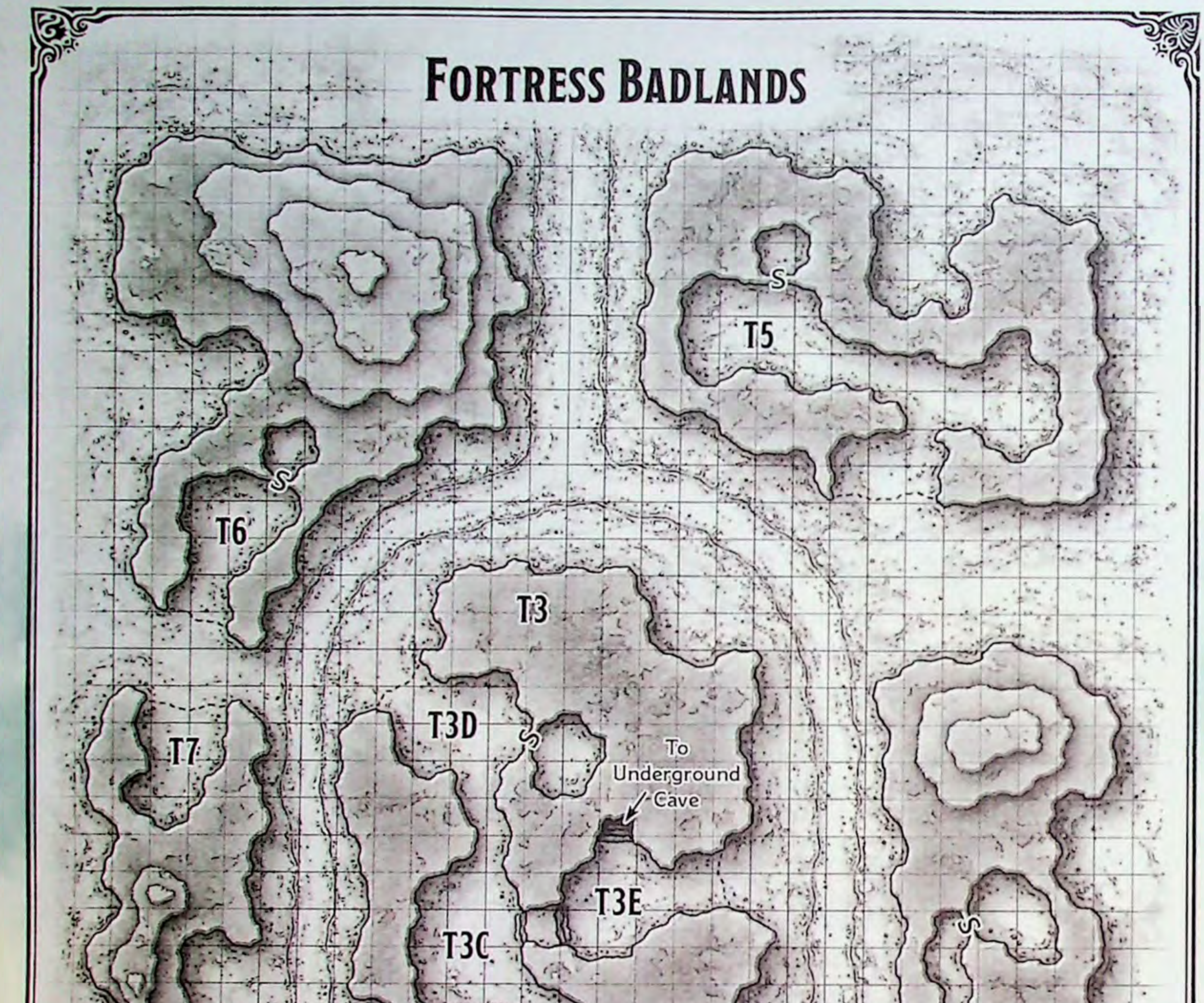
Treasure. The secret chamber is unlit and holds Murgaxor's stash of easily transportable valuables, which he keeps here in case he has to flee the badlands in a hurry. These valuables are in plain view along the north wall:

- A *ring of mind shielding* in a metal jewelry box (the ring holds the soul of a troll mage named Kallanthus, who is afraid to leave the ring and travel to the afterlife)
- A *cloak of elvenkind* crafted from woven vines

T3. Hall of Wisdom

This winding network of tunnels and alcoves holds Murgaxor's collection of books, scrolls, and curios, which are heaped on shelves and in niches along the cave walls. This area has four entry points, each with its own collection of items.

The shadow demons in area T3E investigate any loud noises coming from the neighboring areas.


Fortress Badlands
T5
S
S
T6
T3
T3D
S
To Underground Cave
T7
T3E
S
T3C
S
T3B
T3A
T4
T2
N
W
e
S
+20 ft.
+20 ft.
+20 ft.
T1
T1
T1
T1
1 square = 5 feet

Map 6.2: Fortress Badlands

Mike Schley

T3A. Southeast Entrance

> The floor of this open cave is strewn with the bones of small birds, reptiles, and wild dogs.

The animal bones are the remains of Murgaxor's and Y'demi's past meals.

T3B. Southwest Entrance

> Books and scroll cases are tucked in nooks along the west wall of this open cave. Many of the book spines and scroll cases bear the Strixhaven star.

Items bearing the Strixhaven star were stolen from the university. A character who succeeds on a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check while searching the collection finds several annotated books about the Caerdoon region, located a few miles from the badlands. The annotations, sloppily written in Common, deal with locating sites of large battles and how best to explore those locations.

Treasure. Characters who spend at least 10 minutes searching this area find a *spell scroll* of *fear* and a *spell scroll* of *false life*.

T3C. Empty Chamber

This empty chamber has short tunnels connecting it to area T3B to the south, area T3D to the north, and area T3E to the east.

T3D. Northwest Entrance

> This open cave and its walls hold racks of weapons and spellcasting foci, including orbs, animal fetishes, carved stones, and the like.

The spellcasting foci stored here aren't magical, but one is an obsidian orb cut in the motif of an ancient troll civilization. This orb would fetch 300 gp from a collector.

Secret Door. A character who searches the east wall and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a door disguised to blend in with the surrounding stone. This 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall stone door opens into a smaller secret room.

Treasure. The secret room is unlit and once held Murgaxor's most prized arcane texts, most of which went with him to the Ruins of Caerdoon when he recently relocated there. The remaining texts—of which there are twelve stacked in two piles of six—are still valuable. The university would pay 500 gp for their safe return.

T3E. East Entrance

> Ineptly painted portraits of Murgaxor hang on the walls of this shadowy cave. Stairs cut into the north wall lead down to a lower level.

Four **shadow demons** hide in the shadows of this cave. They attack visitors who aren't accompanied by Murgaxor or Y'demi. Characters who have a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 17 or higher spot the shadow demons before they attack and aren't surprised by them.

The stairs in the north wall lead down to areas U1 through U4, detailed later in the "Underground Cave" section.

T4. Supply Room

> A jumbled pile of supplies lies on the floor of this open cave and spills into a narrow hallway beyond.

This cave holds what remains of the supplies Murgaxor used to explore the Ruins of Caerdoon, located just a few miles away. A character who spends at least 1 hour sifting through the tools can assemble one set of mason's tools, two explorer's packs, one dungeoneer's pack, and one scholar's pack.

Secret Door. A character who searches the northernmost end of the cave and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a door disguised to blend with the surrounding stone. This 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall stone door swings into a small chamber.

Secret Room. Murgaxor kept alchemical supplies in this unlit secret chamber. Most of the supplies have been removed except for two flasks of acid and three flasks of alchemist's fire.

T5. Lab

> The pungent odors of sweet potpourri and chemical preservatives waft from this cave. Carved into the walls are shelves bearing specimen jars, notebooks, and containers of herbs and alchemical reagents. In the middle of the cave rests a smooth stone slab covered in a rusty stain.

Murgaxor conducted horrific experiments here. Primarily, he worked on transferring life from one creature to another.

A character who spends at least 30 minutes skimming the notebooks can make a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check, piecing together the nature of

LOREHOLD EXPEDITIONS INTO THE BADLANDS SOMETIMES AWAKEN MORE THAN MERE MEMORIES.

Murgaxor's work on a success. What Murgaxor describes in his notebooks lines up with the maladies that plagued Strixhaven last year.

Harmless samples of flesh are stored here in jars. However, Murgaxor's experiments created a few unfortunate Undead, which are described below.

Box of Helping Hands. This unmarked, 2-foot-by-3-foot metal box has a simple latch keeping it closed. The box contains a dozen **crawling claws**. If the lid is opened, the crawling claws quickly skitter out. A character who immediately tries to close the lid can make a DC 15 Dexterity check; if the check succeeds, 1d6 crawling claws escape before the lid shuts; the others are trapped in the box, unable to escape until it is opened again.

On their first turn in combat, crawling claws that escaped from the box scurry about the cave, knocking over jars of chemical supplies and creating a chemical mixture that fills the cave with noxious gas for 1 minute. When a creature enters the gas-filled cave for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there, that creature must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (5d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. Creatures that don't need to breathe are immune to the gas, as are the crawling claws. A *gust of wind* spell or similar magic disperses the gas.

Skull in a Jug. Vargas Kancia was a Prismari student; he was researching elemental nodes in the badlands when he was abducted by Murgaxor, whose experiments transformed Vargas into a **flameskull**. Vargas rests in an unsealed, straight-sided glass jar filled with clear goo. If another creature comes within 5 feet of the jug, Vargas awakens, flies out of the jug covered in goo, and erupts in emerald flames. Vargas is confused and enraged, attacking whichever creature awakened him.

A character can use an action to try to persuade Vargas to cease his attacks, doing so with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Once he is talked down, Vargas realizes his anger is unjustified, apologizes for his outburst, and offers to help the characters for the remainder of the adventure. Vargas's priorities are to see Murgaxor brought to justice and to resume his studies at Strixhaven.

Secret Door. A character who searches the northwest wall of the cave and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a door disguised to blend with the surrounding stone. This 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall stone door opens into a cramped secret chamber.

Treasure. The secret chamber is unlit and contains a set of alchemist's supplies along with two *potions of healing* (greater) and one *potion of poison*.

T6. Mushroom Cave

Characters who approach this cave without first exploring area T7 attract the attention of the **gorgon** lairing there, causing the creature to charge out of area T7 and attack them.

> The stench of decay wafts from this unlit cave. Inside, rows of wooden planters mounted on the walls hold a variety of fungi. A large purple mushroom grows in the northwest corner.

The large, purple mushroom growing in the northwest corner is a **shrieker**, which commences shrieking when any creature that's not Murgaxor or Y'demi approaches more than 10 feet inside the cave. The shriek is loud enough to alert the **spectator** in area T1, the **shadow demons** in area T3E, and the **gorgon** in area T7.

The fungi here are used in Murgaxor's alchemical concoctions and poisons. Creatures foolish enough to eat the fungi must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 hour.

Secret Door. A character who searches the north wall of the cave and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a door disguised to blend with the surrounding stone. This 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall stone door pulls open to reveal an unlit room containing a pair of hostile **black puddings**. The puddings spill out and attack as soon as the secret door is opened. Unless the characters were able to see into the room (with the aid of a *clairvoyance* spell or similar magic) before opening the door, they are surprised at the start of this encounter.

T7. Gorgon's Cave

A **gorgon** occupies this otherwise empty cave. Characters who come into view of the grumpy gorgon provoke its anger, causing it to attack them.

Underground Cave

The underground cave was Murgaxor's (and is now Y'demi's) private chambers. It contains space for rituals, research, and quiet contemplation. It is depicted on map 6.3 and has the following features:

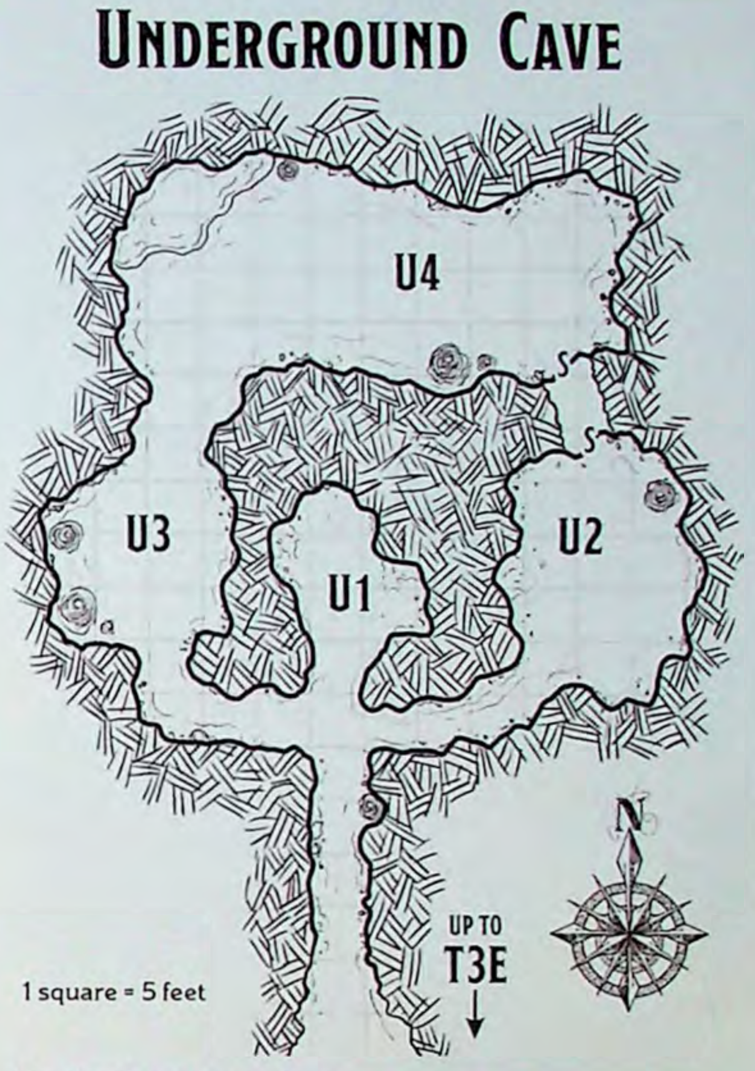
Bare Stone. This cave looks naturally formed, but the stone has been shaped and smoothed by magic. The cave walls have shelves built into them.

Ceilings. The ceilings are 10 feet high and gently curved and smoothed like the walls.

Light. All areas are lit by *continual flame* spells cast on wall sconces.

Scry-Proof. Any attempt to magically scry on a creature, object, or location within the underground cave fails automatically.

SEAN MACDONALD



Map 6.3: Underground Cave

U1. Meditation Alcove

> Just after a three-way intersection, the tunnel widens into an alcove. Gooey mud covers the alcove's floor, and the air is oppressively muggy.

Murgaxor came here to meditate and used magic to transform this alcove into a humid bog suited to his tastes.

Protective Muck. Any creature that bathes in the mud for 1 minute gains 1d4 + 1 temporary hit points for 1 hour. If any temporary hit points remain when the effect expires, the affected creature takes 5 necrotic damage.

U2. Ritual Area

> Ritual circles drawn in fine, chalky powder cover the floor. Notebooks, scrolls, and brass braziers sit on shelves carved into the walls.

Murgaxor used this area to perfect his rituals. Characters who spend 5 minutes or more reading the notebooks and who succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence

(Investigation) check piece together that Murgaxor is conducting his life-draining ritual in the basement of the Ruins of Caerdoon, which is just a few miles to the north of the Fortress Badlands. They also learn that the ritual will be complete in about a week.

Secret Door. A character who searches the area and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a door disguised to blend with the surrounding stone. This 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall stone door opens into a hallway that ends at another secret door, beyond which is area U4. From inside the hallway, characters can spot either secret door without having to make a check.

U3. GUARD CHAMBER

> Two mud-caked, human-sized creatures stand inert in front of the northern exit to this chamber. Crude, articulated skulls of badlands wolves are attached to their heads. Both guards reek of death.

Y'demi created these horrifying Undead to guard her sleeping area. Both use the **ghast** stat block and start combat with 5 temporary hit points, having recently bathed in area U1. The creatures attack without mercy. Combat here alerts Y'demi in area U4, and she investigates.

U4. LIVING AREA

> A copper basin on a wrought-iron stand rests on the floor in the middle of this cave. A pool of smelly water fills the cave's northwest corner.

Murgaxor lived here before decamping to the Ruins of Caerdoon for his ritual. Y'demi (neutral evil human **Oriq blood mage**; see chapter 7) resides here now, waiting for Murgaxor's imminent call to join him.

Copper Basin. The copper basin contains a gallon of fresh blood. So long as she can see the basin and there's a gallon or more of blood in it, Y'demi can use the following bonus action:

Sanguine Tentacles (1/Day). The blood in the copper basin disappears as tentacles of congealed blood fill a 10-foot cube centered at a point on the ground that Y'demi can see within 15 feet of her. The effect lasts for 1 minute, during which time that area is difficult terrain. Any creature entering that area for the first time on a turn or starting its turn there must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be restrained by the tentacles. A creature that starts its turn restrained by the tentacles takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage. A creature restrained by the tentacles can use its action to make either a DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check or a DC 13 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, ending the restrained condition on itself on a success.

Roleplaying Y'demi. Y'demi works with Murgaxor because she's fascinated with his magic, but she isn't willing to die for him.

Y'demi fights until she loses half or more of her hit points, then makes a cutting remark as she tries to escape. Y'demi is patient and cunning. If captured, she tells the students about Murgaxor's setup in Caerdoon, if she thinks doing so will help keep her alive. She informs the characters that Murgaxor's ritual will take about a week to complete. She won't help the party thwart the ritual, but if a character succeeds on a DC 18 Charisma (Intimidation) check, she gives short, honest answers to the characters' questions.

Secret Door. A character who searches the southeast wall and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a door disguised to blend with the surrounding stone. This 5-foot-wide, 10-foot-tall stone door opens to a hallway that ends at another secret door, beyond which is area U2. From inside the hallway, characters can spot either secret door without having to make a check.

Smelly Pool of Water. The smelly water in the northwest pool is drinkable.

DEVELOPMENTS

The information in areas T5, U2, and U4 gives a clear picture of the ritual Murgaxor is conducting, where he's conducting it, and when it will be completed. The characters can rush to confront Murgaxor in the Ruins of Caerdoon right away. However, since they have some time before the ritual finishes, encourage them to return to campus to make any final preparations—not to mention have one final visit with their Friends, Rivals, and Beloveds—before heading into this adventure's final areas.

THIS IS SURREAL, ISN'T IT?

If the characters return to campus before heading to the Ruins of Caerdoon, a fellow student approaches them before they leave the campus and embark on their next journey. This student should be a character's Friend, Rival, or Beloved.

The student looks at the characters with trepidation before giving the character they know best a hug, a pat on the shoulder, or another indication of affection. The student tells the characters they have something to show them and leads the party into Bow's End Tavern (map 3.3 in chapter 3 shows the building's layout).

Once you're ready to begin this event, read or paraphrase the following:

ADVENTURERS NEVER KNOW WHAT LURKS WITHIN AN ANCIENT RUIN.

> Inside the normally raucous Bow's End Tavern, the mood is somber. Your peers are here, and they've heard about your dire mission to head into the Ruins of Caerdoon. They have organized a fete, or something like it, to send you off. Banners that read "We Believe in You!" and "Heroes of Strixhaven!" hang all about the tavern. Friends tearfully wish you luck. Everyone knows what's at stake, and they're all counting on you.

In addition to the characters' Friends, Rivals, and Beloveds, this gathering includes faculty members such as Professor Verelda Lang, Instructor Arkin Minexes, Professor Brenneth Blackstone, Professor Mavinda Sharpbeak, and others at your discretion.

RELATIONSHIPS: BEFORE WE GO

This scene is the final opportunity for the characters to interact with their fellow students on campus before this adventure's climax and conclusion. As such, this Relationship encounter is more free-form than others.

Since this is the last such encounter before the adventure's finale, this scene should be of personal importance to each character. If a player wishes to cement a Beloved Relationship when they normally couldn't or gain a Friend even if they don't have enough Relationship Points, allow them to do so to reflect the poignant nature of this moment.

For example, a character who wishes to have a final moment with a deeply romantic Beloved might sneak up onto the roof of the Biblioplex to have a heart-to-heart under the stars. Another character might want to share a deeply personal story from their childhood with their Friend or Beloved before giving that individual a treasured keepsake.

TIME TO STOP MURGAXOR!

Once the characters are ready to embark on their mission to stop Murgaxor once and for all, they can head through the badlands again and into the Ruins of Caerdoon.

RUINS OF CAERDOON

Murgaxor learned that his ritual must take place in a location where a massacre has occurred. The Ruins of Caerdoon is the perfect location since an ancient battle once took place here. By harnessing the site's latent necromantic energy, Murgaxor plans to draw life energy from the scholars at Strixhaven into his own body. When the ritual is complete, he'll become immortal.

Two hundred years of preparation have led Murgaxor to this moment, and he's taking no chances in seeing it through. Aside from his own formidable magical abilities, Murgaxor has enlisted the Oriq as allies—and even a daemogoth. (See chapter 7 for more information about the Oriq and daemogoths.)

YEONG-HAO HAN

REGIONAL EFFECTS

Murgaxor's ritual wreaks havoc on the equilibrium of life and death, creating the following regional effects in the Ruins of Caerdoon and the fortress, which is detailed in a later section. These effects end 1d6 days after the ritual ends or is interrupted:

Clinging to Life. Death saving throws are made with advantage.

Grievous Wounds. Any creature that scores a critical hit rolls one additional damage die to determine damage.

Withered Vegetation. Vegetation within 1 mile of the fortress appears withered and sickly.

FEATURES OF THE RUINS

Although members of Lorehold College have been known to visit the Ruins of Caerdoon on archaeology expeditions, the area is far from safe or well explored. Most of the fortress has fallen to ruin, but potent magic and sturdy construction have left enough stone standing to make it defensible.

Notable features are summarized below:

Desecrated Earth. The area is awash in necrotic energy. Undead here have advantage on saving throws against being turned.

Fortress Walls. The fortress looks like a blast of energy blew the top two-thirds of it away. The walls are roughly 10 feet high and 2 feet thick unless otherwise specified.

Illumination. No light sources are present in the ruins, which are illuminated by sunlight during the day and moonlight at night.

Trees. The trees here are gnarled and have discolored leaves.

RUINS LOCATIONS

The following areas are keyed to map 6.4.

N1. HAUNTED WATCHTOWER

The fortress used to have multiple watchtowers covering all approaches but now has only one battered tower near the south road. A **wraith**—the tormented remnant of a long-dead garrison commander—stands watch. When it detects visitors, the wraith lets out a shriek that puts the ruins on alert and activates the necromantic barrier described in area N2.

A character who wants to sneak past the watchtower or climb its ladder undetected must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity (Stealth) check. If multiple party members attempt the same task, have them make a group check instead.

N2. WAILING MOAT

> Hundreds of voices wail in rage and frustration from a moat of viscid slime that surrounds the crumbling ruins. At the fortress's southern tip, a shattered bridge droops over the sludge, a ten-foot-wide hole smashed through its center.

Hundreds of soldiers died in ages past assaulting the walls of Caerdoon, and their moss-covered bones rest at the bottom of the fortress's moat.

Shield of the Fallen. When a creature not approved by Murgaxor moves within 10 feet of the moat, a 40-foot-high, 1-inch-thick dome of opaque necrotic energy erupts from the middle of the moat to enclose the ruined fortress (area N6).

When the dome appears, read the following:

> A wall of writhing darkness climbs forty feet in the air, forming an opaque dome around the ruins.

Any creature in or above the moat when the dome appears must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (5d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The creature chooses if it's inside or outside the dome. The dome deals 22 (5d8) necrotic damage to any creature that touches it. A creature takes this damage only once per turn.

Nothing can physically pass through the dome unless certain conditions are met, as explained below. However, the dome doesn't block ethereal creatures or prevent the use of spells such as *dimension door* or *teleport*.

The dome is impervious to most damage. However, a character who examines the dome and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check ascertains that it's possible to make a temporary hole in the dome by dealing radiant damage to it, and that a skilled arcanist can manipulate the dome's magical harmonics to make it susceptible to other damage types, as well (as described below).

Dealing at least 25 radiant damage to the dome with an attack or a spell creates a 10-foot-diameter hole in it. Appearing at the point where the attack or spell made first contact with the dome, this hole remains open for 1 minute.

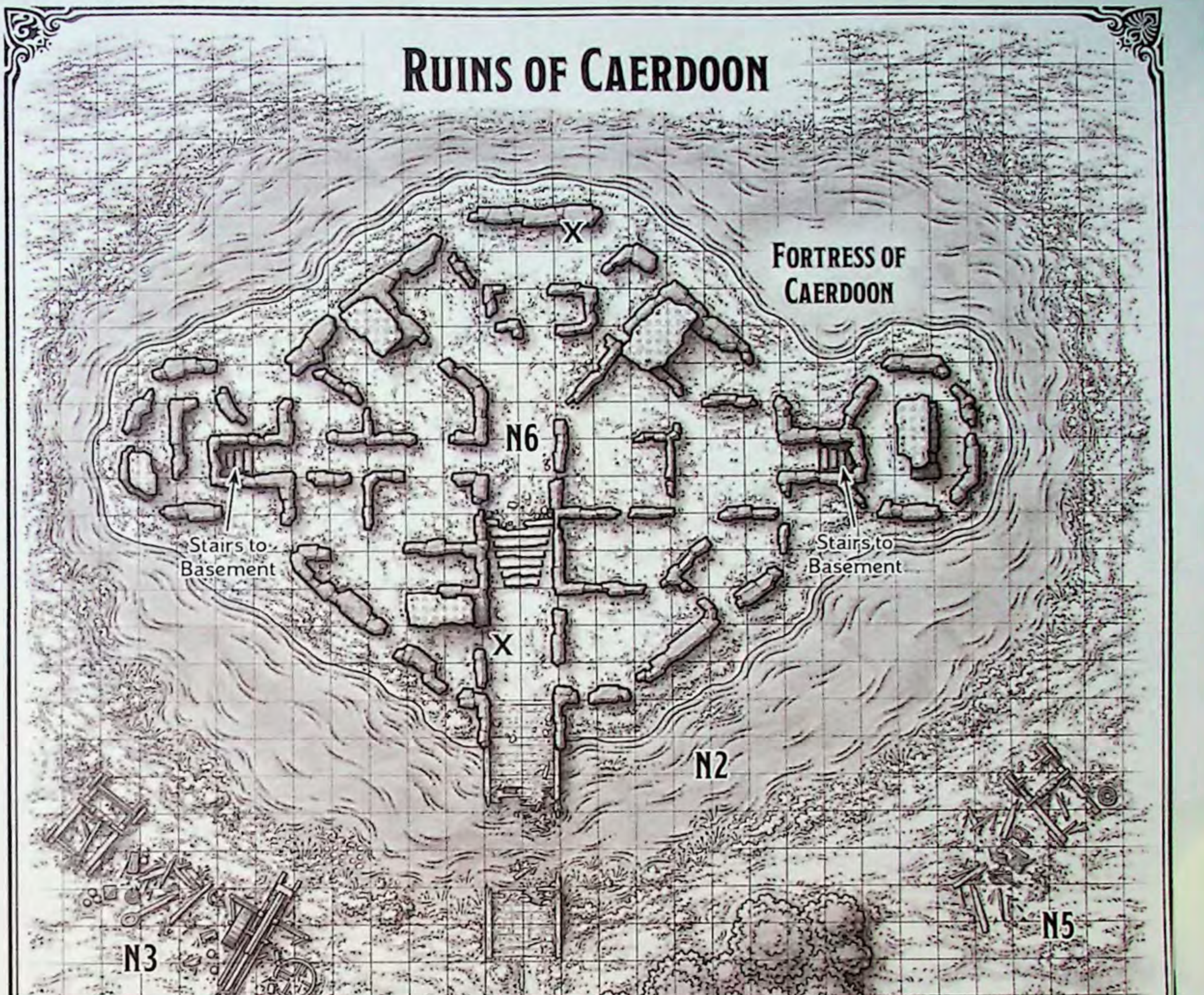
A character can try to manipulate the dome's arcane harmonics by using an action to make a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check. If the check succeeds, the character can switch the requisite damage type from radiant to another type chosen from the following list: acid, bludgeoning, cold, fire, force, lightning, piercing, slashing, or thunder. The change in requisite damage type lasts until the end of the character's next turn.

N3. WRECKAGE

> The twisted wreckage of siege weapons litters the area. Ballistas, catapults, and even a trebuchet lie together in a tangled pile.

The broken siege weapons form a 10-foot-high, 40-foot-long barricade.

Catapult Munition. A character who searches the area and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds a catapult munition roughly the size and weight of a cannonball amid the wreckage. A successful DC 13 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals that the munition is powerful enough to damage the


Ruins of Caerdoon
x
Fortress of Caerdoon
N6
Stairs to Basement
Stairs to Basement
x
N2
N3
N5
+20 ft.
N1
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w
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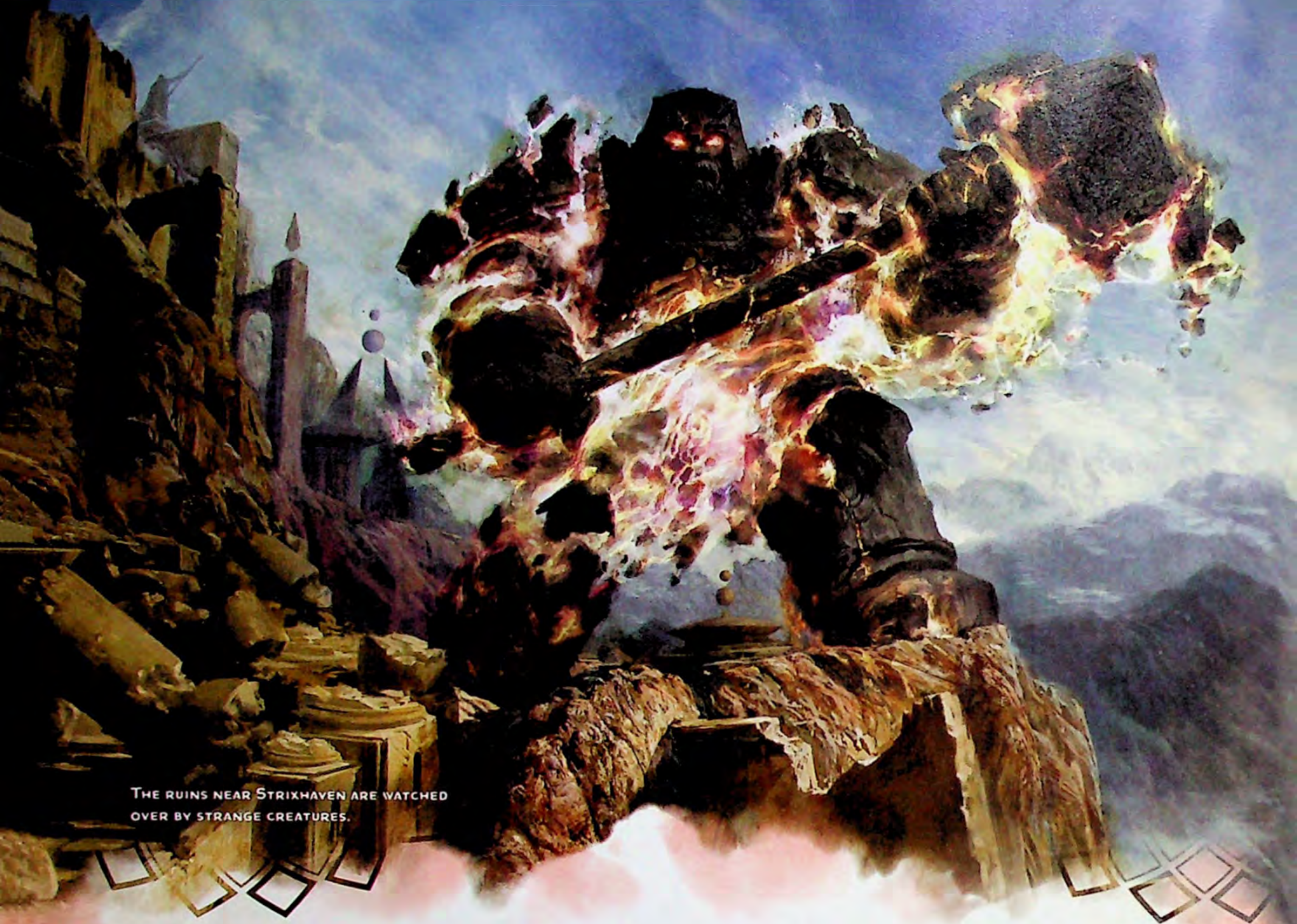
N4
1 square = 5 feet

MIKE SCHLEY

Map 6.4: Ruins of Caerdoon



THE RUINS NEAR STRIXHAVEN ARE WATCHED OVER BY STRANGE CREATURES.

ANTONIO JOSE MANZANEDO

Shield of the Fallen in area N2, provided the dome's magical harmonics are altered so that the dome becomes susceptible to fire damage.

The munition can be thrown up to 30 feet and explodes on impact. Any creature within a 15-foot-radius sphere centered on the point of impact must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. In addition, each object in that area that isn't being worn or carried takes 35 (10d6) fire damage.

N4. Supply Train

> The pulverized remains of a military supply train are heaped alongside the trail leading to the fortress.

The wreckage of a supply train forms a 5-foot-high, 25-foot-long barrier. Climbing atop the wreckage requires a successful DC 10 Strength (Athletics) check.

N5. Siege Towers

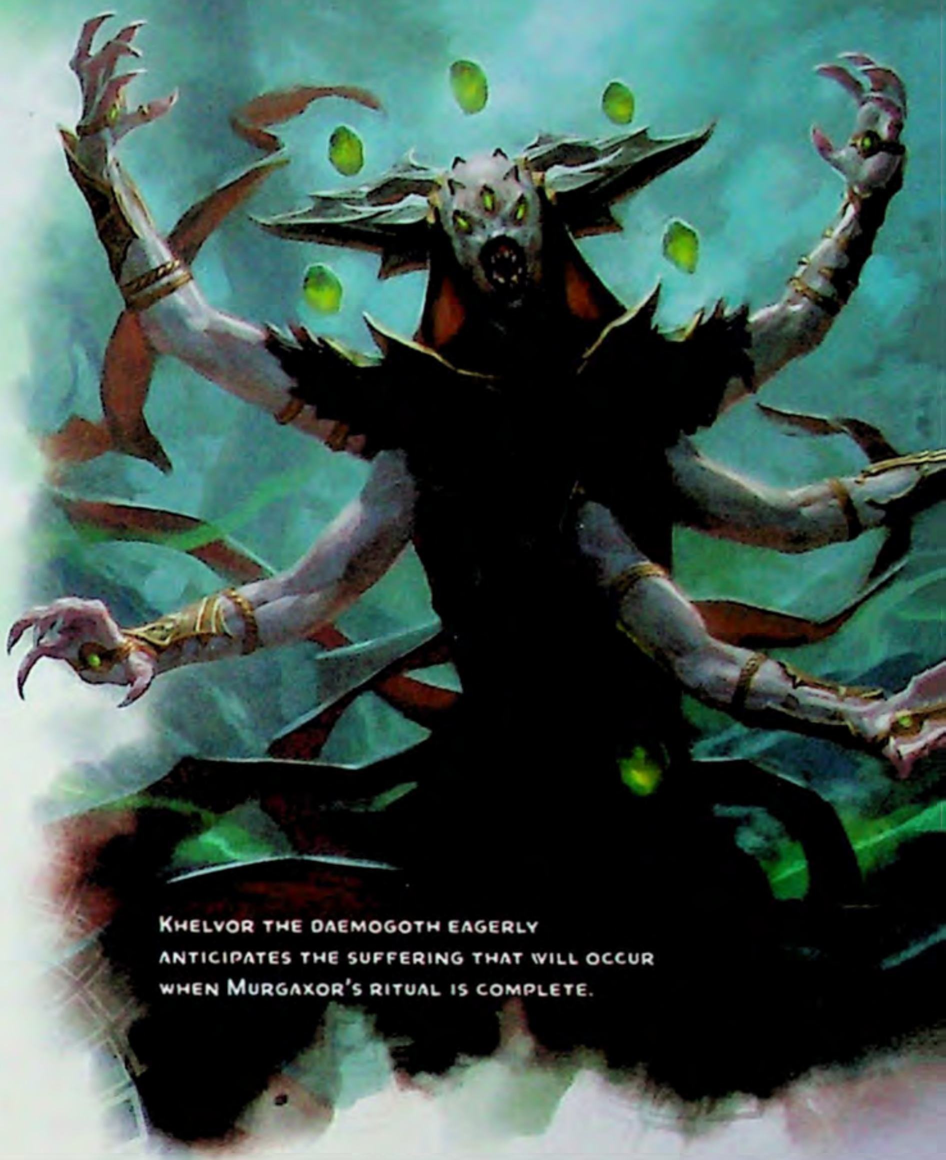
> The remains of two mighty siege towers lie flattened near the moat's edge. The scorch marks of battle can be seen on the wood and steel even after hundreds of years.

The area covered by wreckage is difficult terrain.

Six **wights** crawl out of the wreckage if the characters move or rummage through it. When the wights appear, read:

> A half dozen long-dead soldiers crawl out from underneath the wreckage and get to their feet, their faces grim with determination as they unsheathe their rusty swords.

The wights take their orders from the wraith in area N1, and the wraith has instructed the wights to attack trespassers on sight. However, a character who



KHELVOR THE DAEMOGOTH EAGERLY ANTICIPATES THE SUFFERING THAT WILL OCCUR WHEN MURGAXOR'S RITUAL IS COMPLETE.

calls for a cessation of hostilities can, with a successful DC 13 Charisma (Persuasion) check, convince the wights not to attack on their next turn and answer a few questions instead. This ploy works once, after which further calls for peace fall on deaf ears. Questions the wights can answer include the following:

Where is Murgaxor now? "Probably in the basement under the ruins. He spends most of his time there." (The wights point toward area N6.)

Have you seen Murgaxor recently? "When last we saw him, he was scribing magical glyphs in the ruins." (The wights are referring to the *glyphs of warding* in area N6.)

Why are you on Murgaxor's side? "He has achieved mastery over life and death. There is no better lord to command this ruined fortress."

What do you know about the ruined fortress? "We died defending it, and we defend it still."

Will you help defeat Murgaxor? "No."

N6. FORTRESS

> Little remains of the once-proud fortress. Only ten feet or so of the walls remain, worn and bleached by time and weather.

Khelvor the **daemogoth** (see chapter 7) patrols the fortress, eager to defend Murgaxor in exchange for all the sweet suffering that's about to occur. He is a cunning, self-serving sadist.

Glyphs of Warding. In each 5-foot square marked X on map 6.4 is a *glyph of warding* placed by Murgaxor. Finding each glyph requires a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Investigation) check. If the wights in area N5 warned the characters about the glyphs, checks made to find them have advantage.

Once a glyph is found, a successful DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check disables it. Otherwise, the glyph triggers the first time a creature enters the 5-foot square, activating a *hypnotic pattern* spell (save DC 16) centered on the glyph.

Necrotic Locus. In the middle of the fortress is a disgusting orb of bone, flesh, and necrotic energy. The first time a character sees it, read:

> Pained eyes bulge from a 5-foot-diameter sphere of glistening muscle, ashen skin, and yellowed bone. Oily vapor issues from six mouths on the surface of the sphere, which sits pulsing on the ground.

A character who examines the sphere and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check ascertains that it powers the dome around the ruins (see area N2), and that its haphazard construction makes it susceptible to having its innards torn out or its magic destabilized.

The Locus is a Medium object with AC 15; 50 hit points; a damage threshold of 15; immunity to necrotic, poison, and psychic damage; and resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks. The Locus can't be moved, but it can be damaged in the following special ways:

Rip Out Its Guts. A character can reach inside the Locus through one of its mouths and try to rip out its innards with a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. If the check fails, the character is unsuccessful and takes 10 necrotic damage. If the check succeeds, the character takes 5 necrotic damage and deals 22 (4d10) slashing damage to the Locus, ignoring its damage threshold and resistance to slashing damage.

Undo It with Magic. A character within 5 feet of the Locus can use an action to try to overload it using an incantation taught in school. The character concludes the incantation by making an Intelligence (Arcana) check. If the check fails, the character takes 5 necrotic damage. If the check succeeds, the Locus takes 22 (4d10) force damage, ignoring its damage threshold.

Once the Locus is destroyed, the dome vanishes.

KIERAN YANNER

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Once the characters have defeated Murgaxor's guardians, they might be tempted to run into the fortress's basement immediately. Taking a short rest beforehand might be the wiser course of action, but doing so kills the narrative momentum and might not feel right to your players.

To give the characters a better chance of success, provide them with the benefits of a short rest without making them wait an hour. Below are some suggestions for handling this without pulling the party out of the moment:

- The party comes together, dramatic speeches are given, and the power of friendship refreshes everyone.
- When the Necrotic Locus is destroyed, a backlash of life-giving energy revitalizes the party.

ADVANCE TO 10TH LEVEL!

Each character advances to 10th level before the party descends into the basement of the Fortress of Caerdoon.

CONFRONTING MURGAXOR

Completing the life-draining ritual occupies all of Murgaxor's attention. This distraction coupled with his unbridled hubris give the characters the edge they need to defeat him once and for all.

RITUAL STONES

Murgaxor's ritual can't be completed without five ritual stones, which circle Murgaxor while he performs the ritual. Without the stones, he can't manipulate the forces of life and death and would be overwhelmed by their power. See area M6 for more information about these stones.

BASEMENT FEATURES

The Fortress of Caerdoon's basement has the following features:

Walls. The walls are damp and made of smooth, worked stone.

Ceilings. The ceilings throughout this level are 10 feet high.

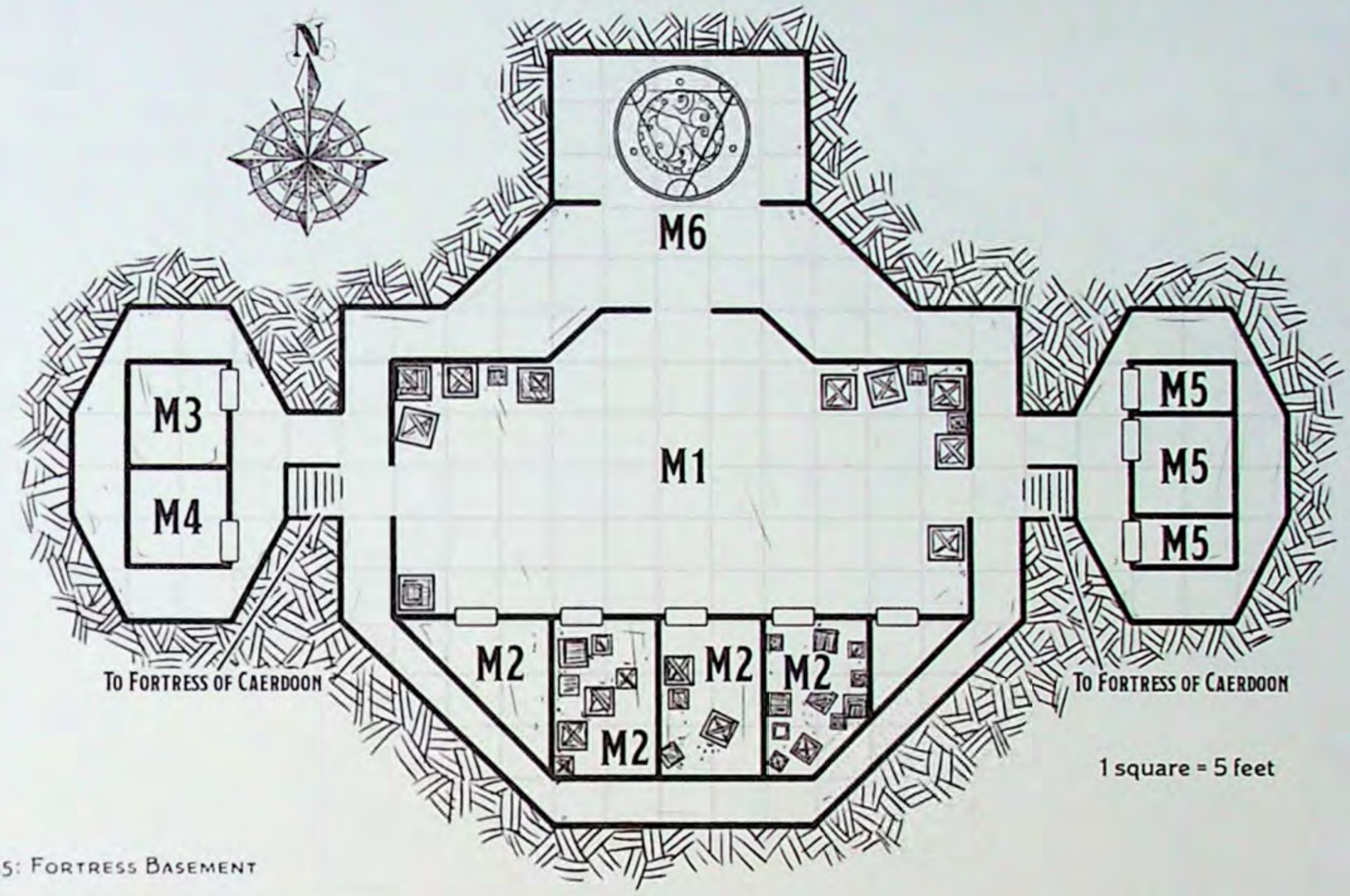
Doors. The doors are constructed of heavy wood. Each sports a simple but sturdy drop-down latch on the outside unless otherwise specified. Latched doors require a successful DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check to batter open from the inside.

Floors. The floors are worked stone and covered with small puddles of water.

Illumination. Sconces hold torches that have *continual flame* spells cast on them. The sconces are spaced at 20-foot intervals along the walls.

THE RUINS OF CAERDOON HOLD MANY REMNANTS OF ANCIENT WARFARE.

FORTRESS OF CAERDOON BASEMENT



Map 6.5: Fortress Basement

LOCATIONS IN THE BASEMENT

The following locations are keyed to map 6.5.

M1. CENTRAL CHAMBER

> Torches illuminate a spacious chamber that has crates and boxes stashed in its corners. Five stout, wooden doors line the chamber's south wall. Soggy texts and scrolls lie in puddles on the floor. To the north, you hear an eerie chant made up of guttural croaks.

Murgaxor is the source of the chant. If the characters make any loud noises here, Murgaxor notices their presence, although he remains in area M6.

The soggy books and blank scrolls lying in puddles on the floor were used by Murgaxor to prepare for his ritual; they no longer have any value.

Crates. A character who spends 1 minute searching the crates can, with a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or Nature) check, find one of the following useful concoctions. Only one of each concoction can be found here:

Alchemist's Doom. Stored in a flask, this concoction is alchemist's fire, except it deals 7 (2d6) fire damage at the start of the target's turns.

Murgaxor's Elixir of Life. Whoever drinks this concoction gains advantage on death saving throws for 24 hours.

M2. MUNITION STORAGE

These rooms were once used to store volatile munitions. A character who spends 1 minute searching one of these rooms can make a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check, finding one of the following items on a success. No more than two of each item can be found:

Bomb. See "Explosives" in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information on bombs.

Catapult Munition. This device looks like a cannonball and weighs as much as one. It functions like the catapult munition found in area N3.

M3. BROKEN ELEVATOR

This room is actually the top of a shaft that once connected the fortress basement to a tunnel network below the basement. An elevator hoist is still attached to the ceiling and has frayed ropes dangling from it. Twenty feet below the door, the shaft is impassibly choked with rubble. Characters can use the dangling ropes to lower themselves down to the rubble. A search of the rubble yields nothing of value, and the elevator platform itself is buried under tons of debris.

JOKUBAS UOGINTAS (L), SEAN MACDONALD (R)

M4. Ruined Storage

Grain and other dry goods used to be stored here, but Murgaxor has consumed them, leaving the room bare except for some empty sacks.

M5. Armory

These rooms held weapons and armor for the fort's defenders. What's left is described below.

North Room. This room holds five suits of chain mail and five suits of splint armor.

Center Room. This room holds six spears, three mauls, and three glaives. The weapons are battered but functional.

South Room. This room holds five heavy crossbows and three dozen bolts.

M6. Immortality Ritual

> Globules of swamp water float in the air, their surfaces rippling. A bullywug, sitting hunched with legs crossed, is partially hidden within a cocoon made of thin, tightly woven strands of mud. Five bright stones buzz around this hunched figure like flies, and a runic circle crackles with eldritch power on the floor below the figure.

The bipedal figure is Murgaxor, who uses the **Oriq blood mage** stat block in chapter 7 and has access to lair actions (see "Murgaxor's Lair Actions" below), which he can use anywhere in the Ruins of Caerdoon. Whirling around him are five stones he needs to complete his life-draining ritual (see "Murgaxor and the Ritual Stones" below). While performing the ritual, Murgaxor can't move or take actions, bonus actions, or reactions. However, he can take lair actions.

Barrier. Murgaxor is surrounded by a barrier of arcane energy resembling a cocoon of writhing mud. While surrounded by this barrier, Murgaxor and the stones encircling him can't be targeted by attacks or spells. The barrier has AC 14; 200 hit points; resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks; and immunity to poison and psychic damage. The barrier can't be circumvented by teleportation magic, which fizzles if anyone tries to teleport past it.

Murgaxor and the Ritual Stones. Once the barrier is destroyed, characters can attack Murgaxor and the five ritual stones circling him. Each stone is an 8-inch-long cylindrical opal covered with delicate golden runes. It has AC 18, 30 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Reducing Murgaxor to 0 hit points or destroying all five ritual stones ends the ritual before it can be completed (see "Stopping the Ritual" below).

Murgaxor's Lair Actions. On initiative count 20 (losing initiative ties), Murgaxor can take one of the following lair actions; after he does so, he can't use that action again until he finishes a long rest:

Clay Behemoth. A **clay golem** erupts from the floor in an unoccupied space within 15 feet of the ritual circle. The golem obeys Murgaxor's commands, takes its turns on initiative count 10 (losing initiative ties), fights until destroyed, and reverts to a mound of inanimate clay after 1 hour.

Earthen Fist. A Medium fist made of packed earth rises from the floor in an unoccupied space that Murgaxor can see within 30 feet of him. The fist then attacks one creature of his choice that is within 5 feet of the fist. The fist has a +11 bonus to hit, and on a hit, the target takes 13 (3d8) bludgeoning damage and is grappled (escape DC 15). The fist disappears if the attack roll misses or if the grapple ends. When the fist disappears, this lair action recharges, allowing Murgaxor to use it again.

Necrotic Burst. Tendrils of necrotic energy erupt from the ritual circle and lash out at any number of creatures Murgaxor can see within 15 feet of the circle. Each target must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, or it takes 5 (1d10) necrotic damage and can't regain hit points until the start of its next turn.

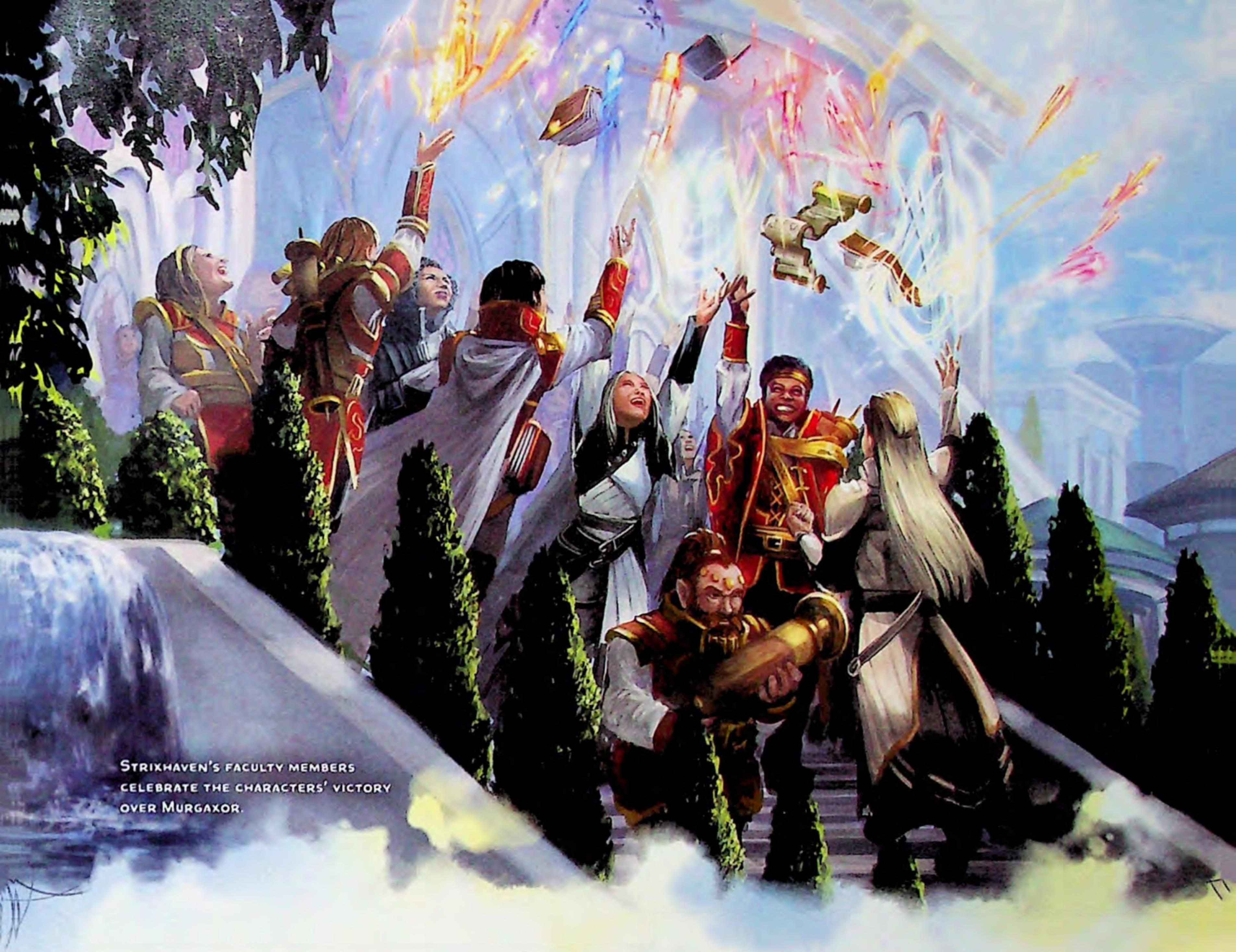
Summon Mephits. Murgaxor summons four **mud mephits** that appear in unoccupied spaces within 15 feet of the ritual circle. The mephits obey Murgaxor's commands, take their turns on initiative count 15 (losing initiative ties), and fight until destroyed.

Stopping the Ritual

If Murgaxor's barrier and ritual stones are destroyed, Murgaxor loses access to his lair actions. In addition, any creatures or effects brought forth by his lair actions (such as the clay golem, the earthen fist, and the mud mephits) transform into heaps of harmless clay, earth, or mud. When Murgaxor's ritual is stopped, read:

> A warbling, high-pitched wail escapes Murgaxor as he crashes to the floor with a wet thump. A rush of air and a concussive blast momentarily replaces all sound. The thrum of magical power is gone.

The pitiful, muddy figure on the floor is Murgaxor (use the **bullywug** stat block). When the ritual was disrupted, his powers dissipated as well. In this state, he no longer poses a threat to anyone. The characters have won!



STRIXHAVEN'S FACULTY MEMBERS CELEBRATE THE CHARACTERS' VICTORY OVER MURGAXOR.

ALAYNA DANNER

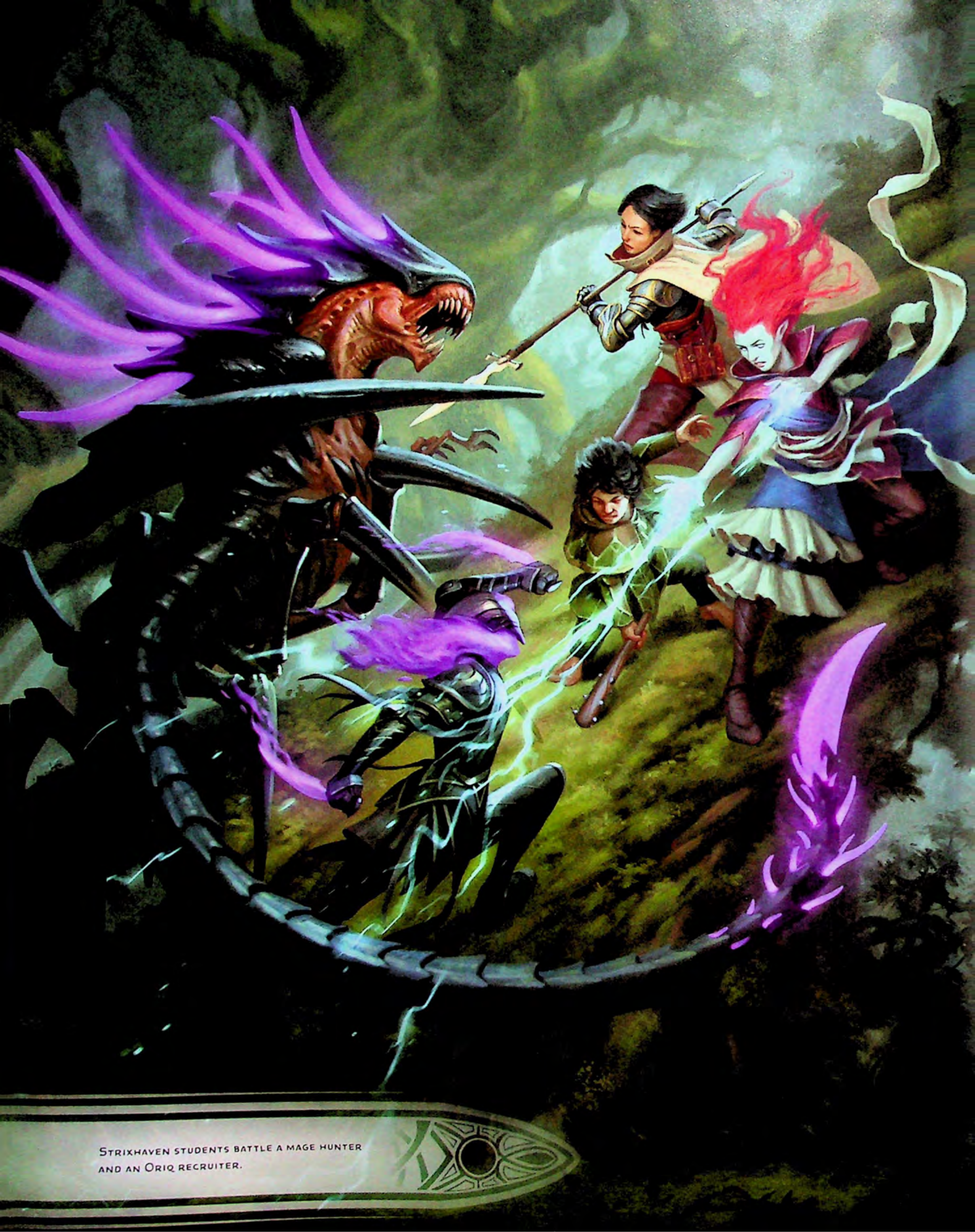
HEROES OF STRIXHAVEN

If the characters stop Murgaxor's ritual, the mishaps plaguing Strixhaven University cease, and the corruption affecting Strixhaven's scholars vanishes. If Murgaxor survives the ritual's premature end, the characters have a choice to make. They can take him back to Strixhaven to stand trial for his crimes, or they can administer justice themselves.

News of Murgaxor's defeat lifts the gloom on campus and restores its typically joyful atmosphere. Professor Sharpbeak tells the characters that the faculty plans to honor the heroes on their graduation day with a celebration attended by their Friends, Beloveds, and even Rivals. The faculty also offers each character a token of gratitude, in the form of a rare or uncommon magic item of the character's choice.

FAILING TO STOP THE RITUAL

If all the characters fall unconscious or die in the final encounter, they fail to stop Murgaxor's ritual. Shortly afterward, the ritual deals 70 (20d6) necrotic damage to everyone on campus as Murgaxor siphons their life force. Hundreds of scholars die, and many more are severely injured. Murgaxor becomes immortal and one of the most powerful spellcasters in the world. If the characters survive, perhaps the Founder Dragons and the archaics can guide them as they attempt to stop Murgaxor in a dystopian new world.



Strixhaven students battle a mage hunter and an Oriq recruiter.

CHAPTER 7

Friends and Foes

THIS CHAPTER PROVIDES MORE THAN FORTY monsters and NPCs who live in and around Strixhaven. They appear in this book's adventures, and you're free to use them in adventures of your own creation, whether those tales are set in the university or elsewhere in the D&D multiverse.

The creatures in this bestiary are organized alphabetically. A few creatures are gathered under a group heading; for example, the "Lorehold Scholars" section contains stat blocks for faculty and students of Lorehold, and those stat blocks are presented alphabetically within that section.

The Strixhaven Creatures table below lists every creature in this chapter, along with the creature's type and challenge rating (CR).

Strixhaven Creatures

Creature	Creature Type	CR
Archaic	Celestial	18
Art Elemental Mascot	Elemental	1/4
Beledros Witherbloom	Dragon	24
Brackish Trudge	Plant	3
Cogwork Archivist	Construct	4
Daemogoth	Fiend	10
Daemogoth Titan	Fiend	16
First-Year Student	Humanoid	1/2
Fractal Mascot	Construct	1/4
Galazeth Prismari	Dragon	23
Groff	Plant	4
Inkling Mascot	Ooze	1/4
Lorehold Apprentice	Humanoid	2
Lorehold Pledgemage	Humanoid	4
Lorehold Prof. of Chaos	Humanoid	7
Lorehold Prof. of Order	Humanoid	7
Mage Hunter	Monstrosity	5
Oracle of Strixhaven	Humanoid	15
Oriq Blood Mage	Humanoid	9
Oriq Recruiter	Humanoid	4
Pest Mascot	Monstrosity	1/4
Prismari Apprentice	Humanoid	2
Prismari Pledgemage	Humanoid	4
Prismari Prof. of Expression	Humanoid	7
Prismari Prof. of Perfection	Humanoid	7
Quandrix Apprentice	Humanoid	2
Quandrix Pledgemage	Humanoid	4
Quandrix Prof. of Substance	Humanoid	7
Quandrix Prof. of Theory	Humanoid	7
Relic Sloth	Beast	2
Ruin Grinder	Construct	5
Shadrix Silverquill	Dragon	22
Silverquill Apprentice	Humanoid	2
Silverquill Pledgemage	Humanoid	4
Silverquill Prof. of Radiance	Humanoid	7
Silverquill Prof. of Shadow	Humanoid	7
Spirit Statue Mascot	Construct	1/4
Strixhaven Campus Guide	Construct	1
Tanazir Quandrix	Dragon	24
Velomachus Lorehold	Dragon	25
Witherbloom Apprentice	Humanoid	2
Witherbloom Pledgemage	Humanoid	4
Witherbloom Prof. of Decay	Humanoid	7
Witherbloom Prof. of Growth	Humanoid	7

Using a Stat Block

This chapter is a companion to the *Monster Manua.* and adopts a similar presentation. If you are unfamiliar with the monster stat block format, read the introduction of the *Monster Manual* before proceeding further. That book explains stat block terminology and gives rules for various monster traits—information that isn't repeated here.

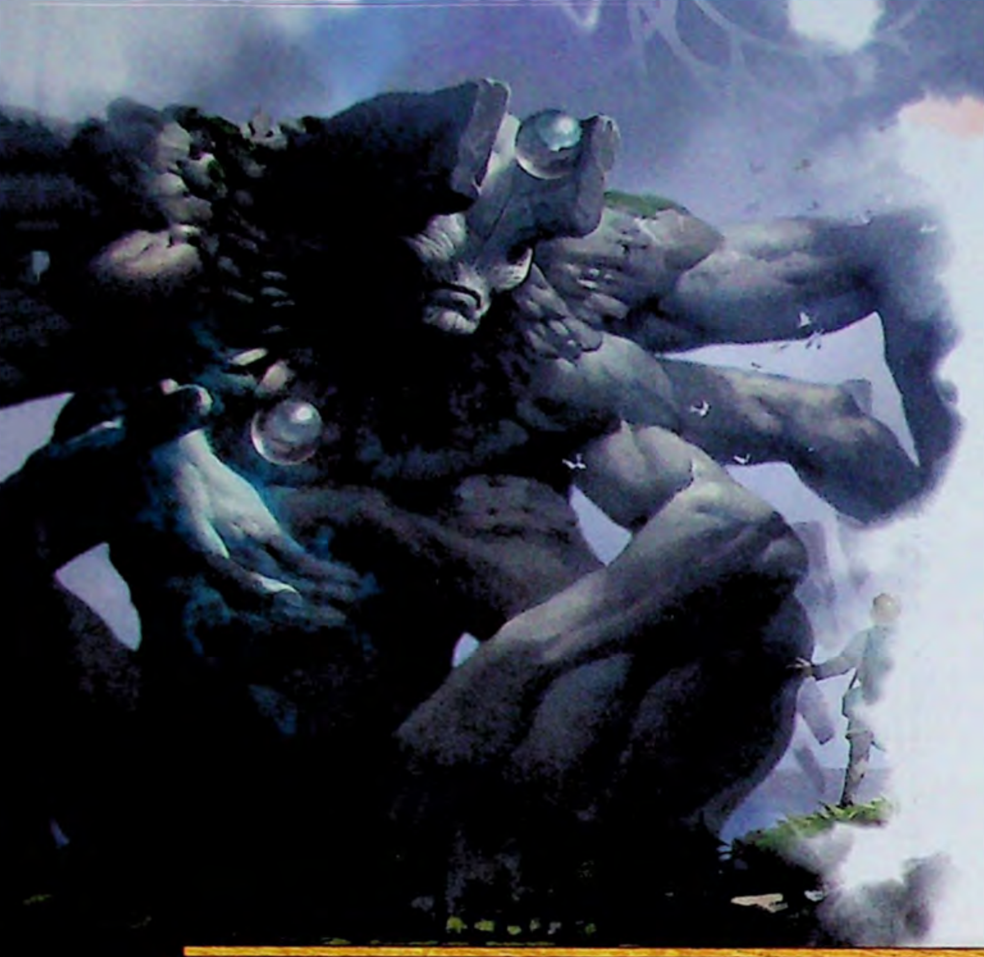
Unusual Attacks and Magic

Herein you will find some weapons that deal unusual damage types and spellcasting that functions in atypical ways. Such an exception is a special feature of a stat block and represents how the creature uses the weapon or casts its spells; the exception has no effect on how a weapon or a spell functions for someone else.

Meeting Magic Item Prerequisites

If a stat block contains the name of a class in the creature's name or in parentheses under the name, the creature is considered a member of that class for the purpose of meeting prerequisites for magic items.

DMITRY BURMAK



ARCHAIC

Archaics are towering, multi-armed creatures overflowing with magic. Despite their solitude, archaics carry vast understanding of magic and the world's history, as well as the ability to warp the fabric of the world around them. Sages who seek out archaics for their knowledge receive confusing and often contradictory answers to questions. If a supplicant successfully unwinds the tangle, the answer they seek is revealed.

In truth, archaics are the reincarnated souls of the oracles of Strixhaven. When an oracle dies, their soul travels back through time to the explosion of magic that brought the Founder Dragons into being. In that outrush of creative force, the oracle's soul can be caught in the tide and clad in the very substance of the world, becoming an archaic. Because their knowledge cuts across the flow of time, archaics are careful how much they reveal to mortals and thus tend to speak in riddles.

ARCHAIC

Gargantuan Celestial, Typically Neutral

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)
Hit Points 245 (14d20 + 98)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	10 (+0)	24 (+7)	27 (+8)	24 (+7)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +14, Wis +13, Cha +11
Skills Arcana +20, Deception +11, History +20, Perception +13
Damage Resistances force
Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, petrified, paralyzed, poisoned, stunned
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 23
Languages all
Challenge 18 (18,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +6

Enigmatic Mind. The archaic's mind can't be read, creatures can communicate telepathically with the archaic only if it allows, and magic can't determine whether the archaic is lying.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the archaic fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Unusual Nature. The archaic doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The archaic makes two Force Strike attacks. It can also use Gravity Shift, if available.

Force Strike. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 15 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 19 (2d10 + 8) force damage, and the target is pulled up to 10 feet toward the archaic or pushed 10 feet away from it, as the archaic chooses.

Gravity Shift (Recharge 5–6). The archaic reverses gravity for one creature it can see within 100 feet of itself. The creature must succeed on a DC 22 Wisdom saving throw or fall 100 feet upward. If the falling creature encounters a solid object (such as a ceiling) in this fall, it strikes the object just as it would during a downward fall. If the creature reaches the top of the area without striking anything, it hovers there until the start of the archaic's next turn, at which time gravity returns to normal and the creature falls.

Spellcasting. The archaic casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 22):

At will: *detect magic, divination, sending*
1/day each: *banishment, forcecage*

Teleport. The archaic teleports to an unoccupied space that it can see within 120 feet of itself.

REACTIONS

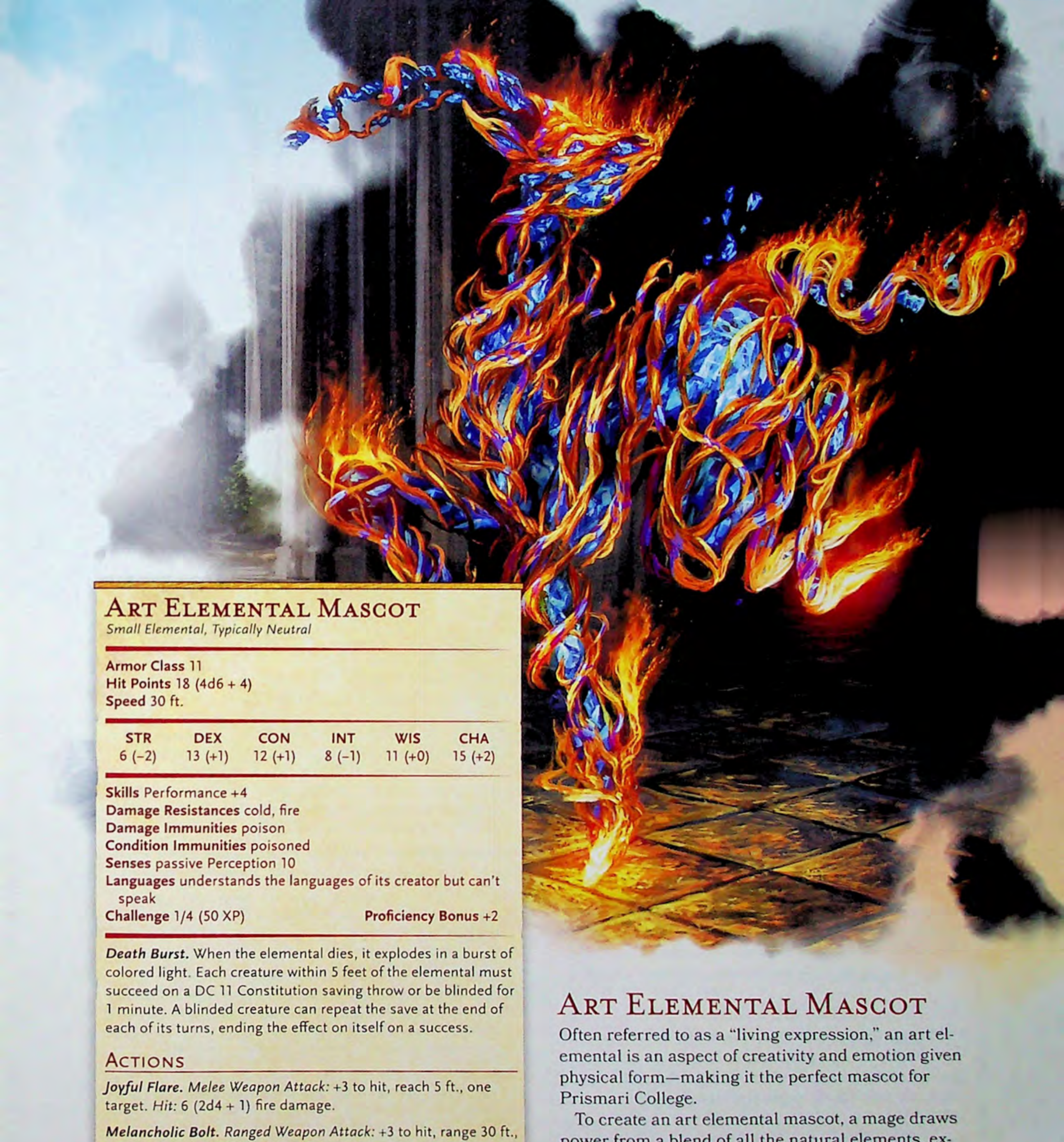
Spell Mimicry (1/Day). Immediately after a creature the archaic can see casts a spell of 5th level or lower, that creature must succeed on a DC 22 Charisma saving throw, or the archaic immediately casts the same spell at the same level (+14 to hit with spell attacks, spell save DC 22), requiring no material components and choosing the spell's targets.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The archaic can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The archaic regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Strike. The archaic makes one Force Strike attack.
Teleport. The archaic uses Teleport.
Unravel Magic (Costs 2 Actions). The archaic targets one creature it can see within 120 feet of itself. The target must succeed on a DC 22 Constitution saving throw or take 35 (10d6) force damage, and each spell of 5th level or lower on the target ends.

LIUS LASAHIDO



Art Elemental Mascot

Small Elemental, Typically Neutral

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 18 (4d6 + 4)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (−2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	8 (−1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills Performance +4
Damage Resistances cold, fire
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Death Burst. When the elemental dies, it explodes in a burst of colored light. Each creature within 5 feet of the elemental must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be blinded for 1 minute. A blinded creature can repeat the save at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Actions

Joyful Flare. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 1) fire damage.

Melancholic Bolt. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 1) cold damage.

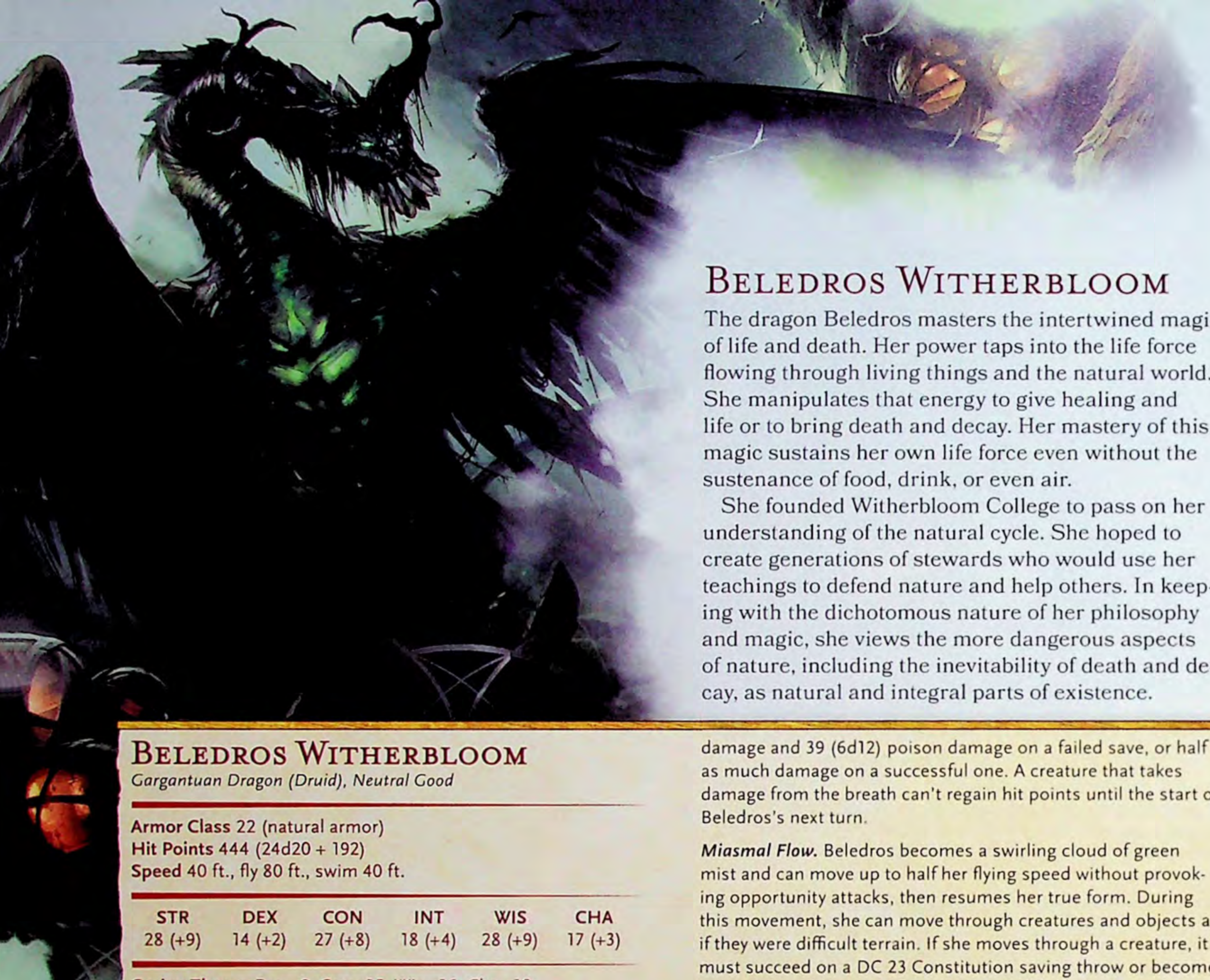
Captivating Artistry (1/Day). The elemental targets one creature it can see within 30 feet of itself. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Charisma saving throw or be charmed for 1 minute. The charmed target can repeat the save at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

ALAYNA DANNER

Art Elemental Mascot

Often referred to as a "living expression," an art elemental is an aspect of creativity and emotion given physical form—making it the perfect mascot for Prismari College.

To create an art elemental mascot, a mage draws power from a blend of all the natural elements, extracting their vibrant colors to craft a swirling outer shell before imbuing its core with a planar spirit. As creatures of both precise elemental study and rebellious expression, art elementals can both wreak elemental destruction and emotionally captivate the creatures around them.



RAYMOND SWANLAND

BELEDROS WITHERBLOOM

The dragon Beledros masters the intertwined magic of life and death. Her power taps into the life force flowing through living things and the natural world. She manipulates that energy to give healing and life or to bring death and decay. Her mastery of this magic sustains her own life force even without the sustenance of food, drink, or even air.

She founded Witherbloom College to pass on her understanding of the natural cycle. She hoped to create generations of stewards who would use her teachings to defend nature and help others. In keeping with the dichotomous nature of her philosophy and magic, she views the more dangerous aspects of nature, including the inevitability of death and decay, as natural and integral parts of existence.

BELEDROS WITHERBLOOM

Gargantuan Dragon (Druid), Neutral Good

Armor Class 22 (natural armor)
Hit Points 444 (24d20 + 192)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	14 (+2)	27 (+8)	18 (+4)	28 (+9)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +9, Con +15, Wis +16, Cha +10
Skills Arcana +18, Medicine +16, Nature +18, Perception +16
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 26
Languages Common, Draconic, Druidic, Sylvan
Challenge 24 (62,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +7

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Beledros fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

Unusual Nature. Beledros doesn't require air, food, or drink.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Beledros makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (1d10 + 9) piercing damage plus 6 (1d12) necrotic damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (1d6 + 9) slashing damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature, it is knocked prone.

Decaying Breath (Recharge 5–6). Beledros exhales decaying energy in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 23 Constitution saving throw, taking 39 (6d12) necrotic damage and 39 (6d12) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A creature that takes damage from the breath can't regain hit points until the start of Beledros's next turn.

Miasmal Flow. Beledros becomes a swirling cloud of green mist and can move up to half her flying speed without provoking opportunity attacks, then resumes her true form. During this movement, she can move through creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. If she moves through a creature, it must succeed on a DC 23 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until the end of its next turn. If Beledros ends this move inside an object, she takes 5 (1d10) force damage and is shunted to the nearest unoccupied space.

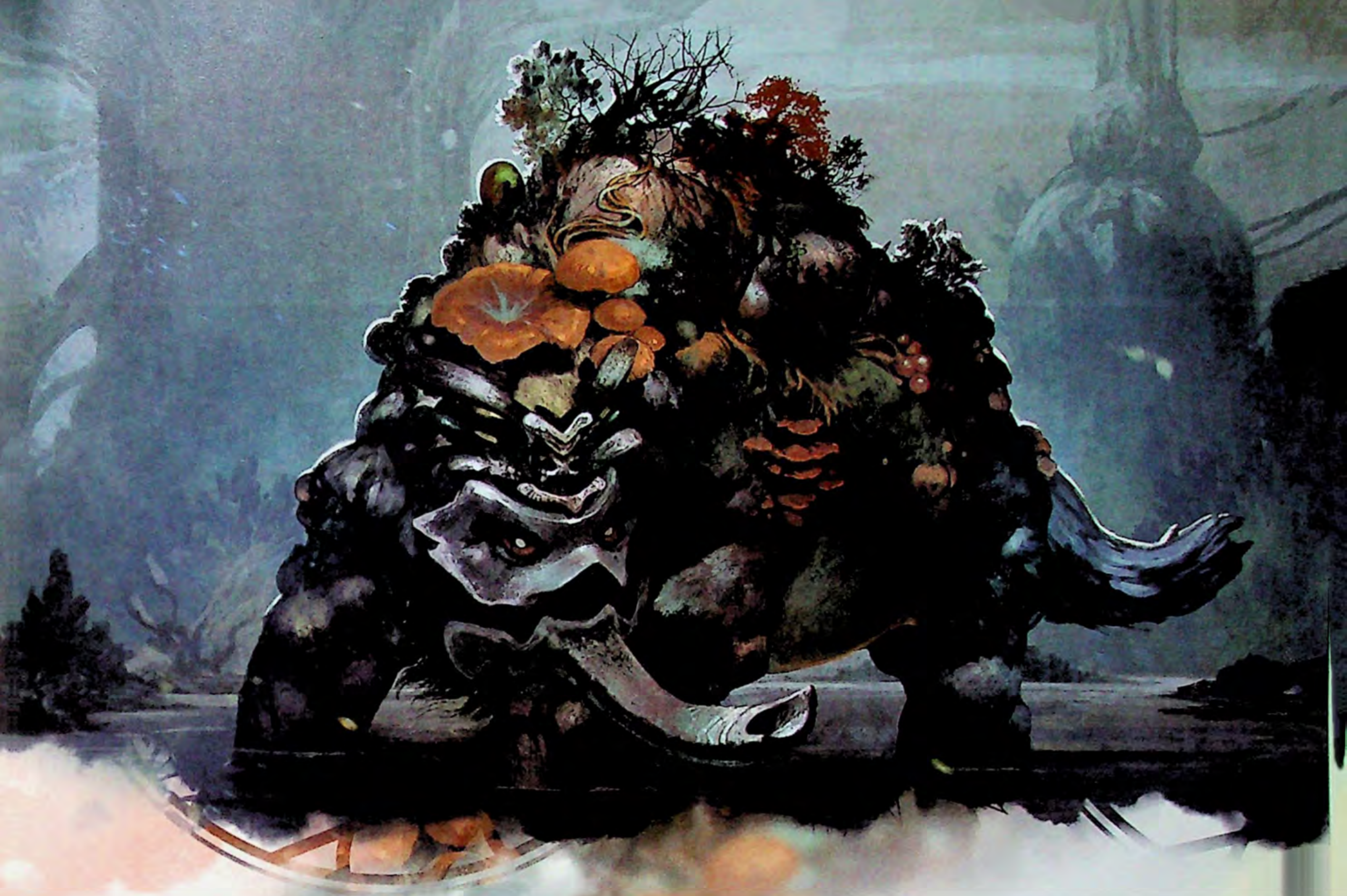
Spellcasting. Beledros casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability:

1/day each: *greater restoration, mass cure wounds, plant growth, revivify, speak with dead*

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Beledros can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Beledros regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Claw. Beledros makes one Claw attack.
Miasmal Flow (Costs 2 Actions). Beledros uses Miasmal Flow.
Teeming with Life (Costs 3 Actions). Beledros magically summons 1d4 **pest mascots** (in this chapter) in unoccupied spaces she can see within 60 feet of herself. The pests obey her commands and take their turns immediately after hers. Any creature, other than a pest, takes 9 (2d8) poison damage if it starts its turn within 5 feet of one or more of these pests. When one of these pests drops to 0 hit points, Beledros regains 9 hit points. These pests disappear after 10 minutes, when Beledros dies, or when she uses this action again.



BRACKISH TRUDGE

Brackish trudges are lumbering masses of sentient fungus and vegetation that thrive in the bayou. They are living examples of the conflicting forces of life and decay existing in a harmonious cycle. Flowers and other plant life grow on their backs, necks, and heads. When these plants die, they decay and become the ideal habitat for fungi. The older a trudge is, the wilder and more varied are the plants and fungi that thrive in the tiny ecosystem on its back.

While sometimes ill-tempered and territorial, brackish trudges are usually content to mind their own business. When trudges are roused to defend themselves or drive off rivals, their punishing tusks laced with deadly fungus spores can make short work of the unwary. Trudges are also notoriously difficult to slay; the energies of life and death within them allow them to survive harrowing injuries.

TOMASZ JEDRUSZEK

BRACKISH TRUDGE

Large Plant, Unaligned

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

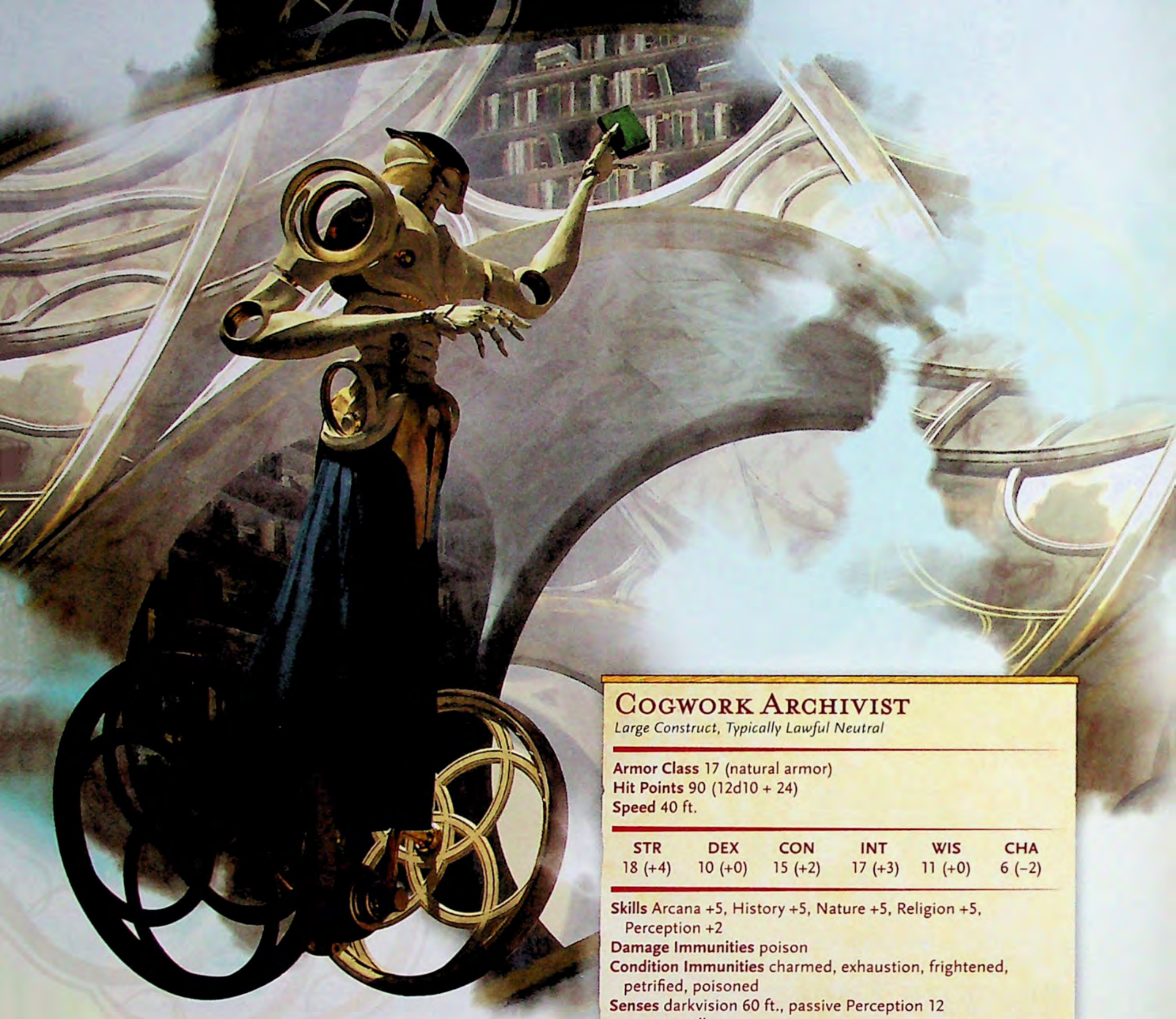
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	4 (−3)	14 (+2)	4 (−3)

Skills Perception +4
Damage Resistances fire
Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages —
Challenge 3 (700 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Fungal Fortitude. If damage reduces the trudge to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the trudge drops to 1 hit point instead.

ACTIONS

Tusk. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d10 + 5) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) poison damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.



COGWORK ARCHIVIST

Programmed with knowledge of Strixhaven's extensive lore catalog, cogwork archivists serve as keepers of the university's various libraries. The archivists' towering metal frames are equipped with long, articulated limbs and retractable conservator tools, which they use to organize and preserve documents from throughout Strixhaven's winding history. Many cogwork archivists can be found among the towering shelves of the Biblioplex, simultaneously retrieving scrolls for curious students while keeping a stern eye on any rowdy groups that might disrupt the quiet atmosphere.

COGWORK ARCHIVIST

Large Construct, Typically Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 90 (12d10 + 24)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	6 (−2)

Skills Arcana +5, History +5, Nature +5, Religion +5, Perception +2
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, petrified, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12
Languages all
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Magic Resistance. The archivist has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

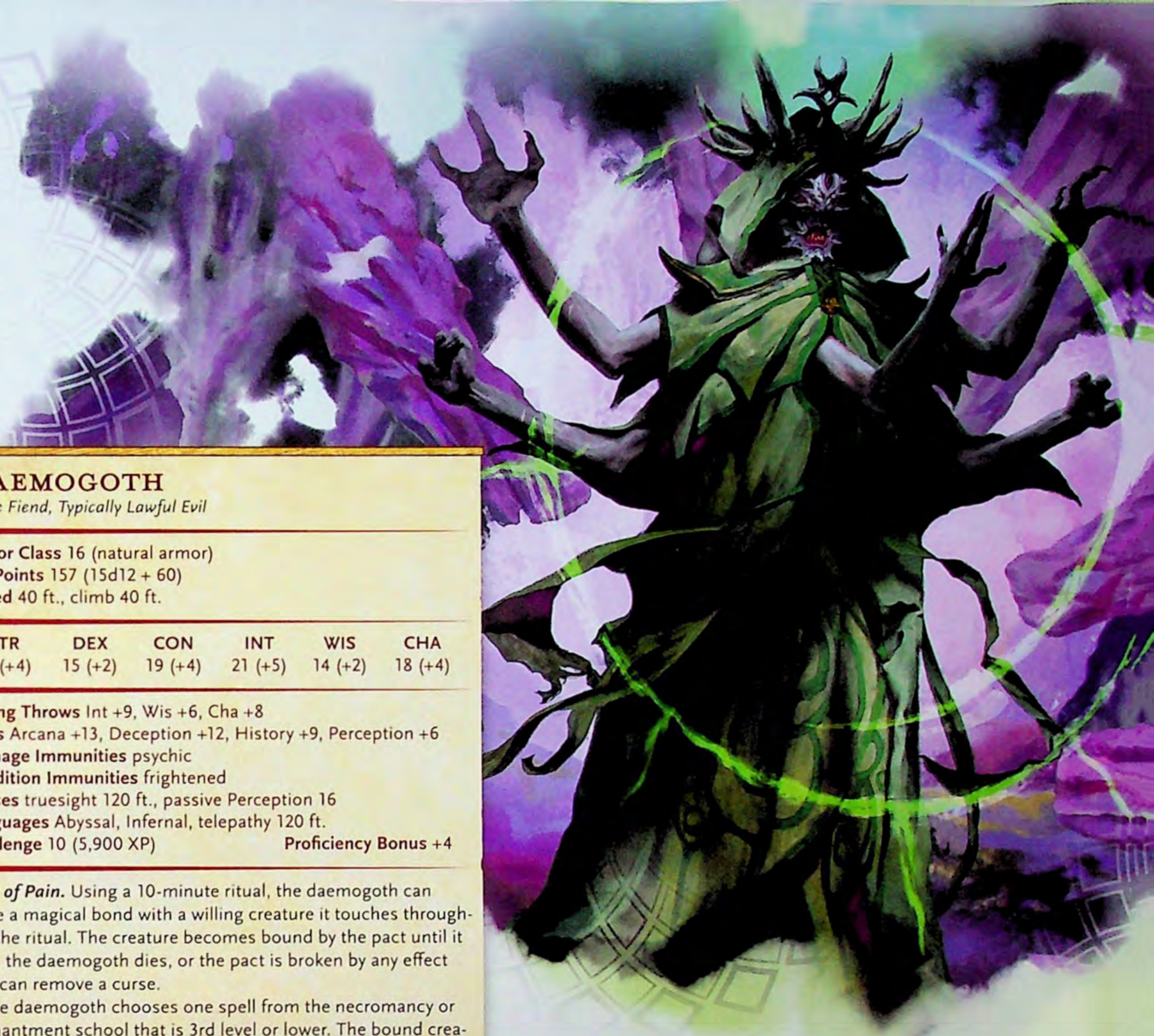
Multiattack. The archivist makes two Grasping Limb attacks.

Grasping Limb. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). The archivist can have no more than two targets grappled at a time.

Spellcasting. The archivist casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability:

At will: *dancing lights, prestidigitation*
2/day: *silence*

JOSEPH MEEHAN



ALEX BROCK

DAEMOGOTH

Huge Fiend, Typically Lawful Evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 157 (15d12 + 60)
Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	15 (+2)	19 (+4)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Int +9, Wis +6, Cha +8
Skills Arcana +13, Deception +12, History +9, Perception +6
Damage Immunities psychic
Condition Immunities frightened
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Abyssal, Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 10 (5,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +4

Pact of Pain. Using a 10-minute ritual, the daemogoth can forge a magical bond with a willing creature it touches throughout the ritual. The creature becomes bound by the pact until it dies, the daemogoth dies, or the pact is broken by any effect that can remove a curse.

The daemogoth chooses one spell from the necromancy or enchantment school that is 3rd level or lower. The bound creature can cast that spell using this pact, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability. When it casts the spell, the creature takes 7 (2d6) psychic damage, which can't break the creature's concentration on a spell. Once the bound creature casts the spell in this way, it can't do so again until it finishes a long rest.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The daemogoth makes three Agonizing Burst attacks. It can use Terrify, if available, in place of one of the attacks.

Agonizing Burst. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d10) force damage. If the target is a creature, the daemogoth regains 5 hit points.

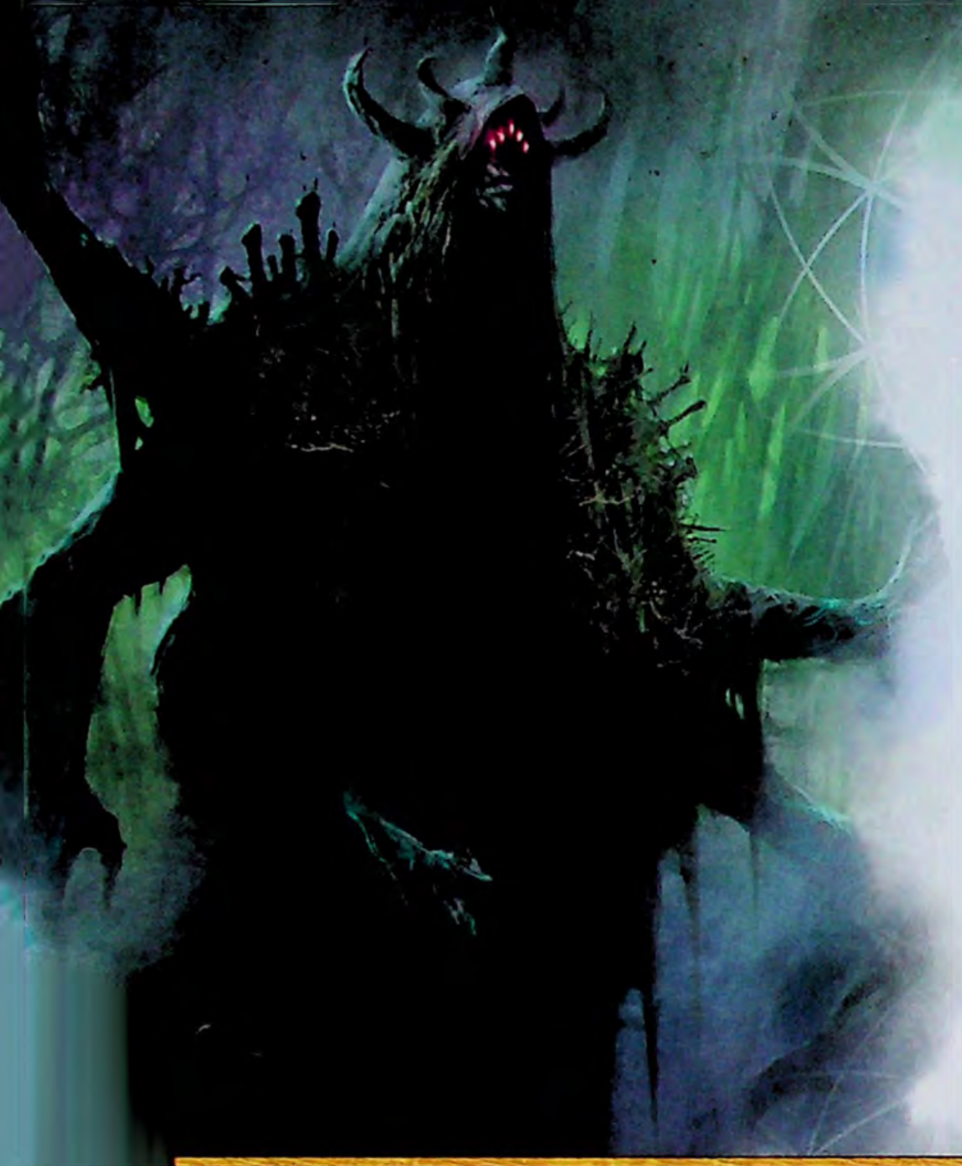
Terrify (Recharge 4–6). The daemogoth targets one creature it can see within 120 feet of itself. The target must make a DC 17 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 33 (6d10) psychic damage and is frightened of the daemogoth until the end of the daemogoth's next turn, and the daemogoth regains 5 hit points. On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage and isn't frightened, and the daemogoth doesn't heal.

DAEMOGOTH

Slipping through the darkest corners of the world, daemogoths are powerful fiendish creatures that feed on misery and other negative emotions. Some sages refer to daemogoths as tear lickers, owing to the fiends' tendency to lurk near battlefields and other sites of great tragedy to consume the anguish saturating the area.

Daemogoths are creatures of forbidden knowledge and magic, all fueled by their consumption of anguish. They trade magical influence over the lives and minds of others to ambitious mortals in exchange for the mortal's agony.

Daemogoths are alien-looking in the extreme. Their eyes are insectile or smooth and bulbous like gleaming jewels, and they have five arms. They typically wear long robes, which drape low over their forms, and they sport a halo of horns, antlers, or floating stones or crystals.



CHRIS COLD

DAEMOGOTH TITAN

Daemogoth titans are towering monsters that blight the land around them. A daemogoth grows in power over the course of decades spent feeding on sorrow and draining life from nature. Eventually that growth turns the daemogoth into a titan.

The titans maintain their lesser cousins' ability to trade magical power for a mortal's pain, but they tend to demand more punishing suffering in exchange for their pacts or knowledge.

BARBED GIFTS

When a supplicant piques a daemogoth titan's interest, the titan can grant a blessing to the supplicant (see "Supernatural Gifts" in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). As long as the creature has the blessing, it must expend and roll two of its Hit Dice whenever it finishes a long rest. It takes psychic damage equal to the total rolled, and its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the psychic damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes its next long rest. The creature dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0. The blessing can be removed only by a *wish* spell.

DAEMOGOTH TITAN

Gargantuan Fiend, Typically Chaotic Evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 203 (11d20 + 88)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	10 (+0)	26 (+8)	24 (+7)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Int +12, Wis +9, Cha +10
Skills Arcana +17, Deception +15, History +12, Perception +9
Damage Immunities psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 19
Languages Abyssal, Infernal, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 16 (15,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +5

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the titan fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead.

Pact of Suffering. Using a 10-minute long ritual, the titan can forge a magical bond with a willing creature it touches throughout the ritual. The creature becomes bound by the pact until it dies, the titan dies, or the pact is broken by a *wish* spell.

The titan chooses one spell from the necromancy or enchantment school that is 8th level or lower. The bound creature can cast that spell using this pact, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability. When it casts the spell, the creature takes 21 (6d6) psychic damage, which can't break the creature's concentration on a spell. Once the bound creature casts the spell in this way, it can't do so again until it finishes a long rest.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The titan makes two Agonizing Burst attacks.

Agonizing Burst. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d6 + 7) force damage. If the target is a creature, the titan regains 5 hit points.

Teleport. The titan teleports to an unoccupied space it can see within 120 feet of itself.

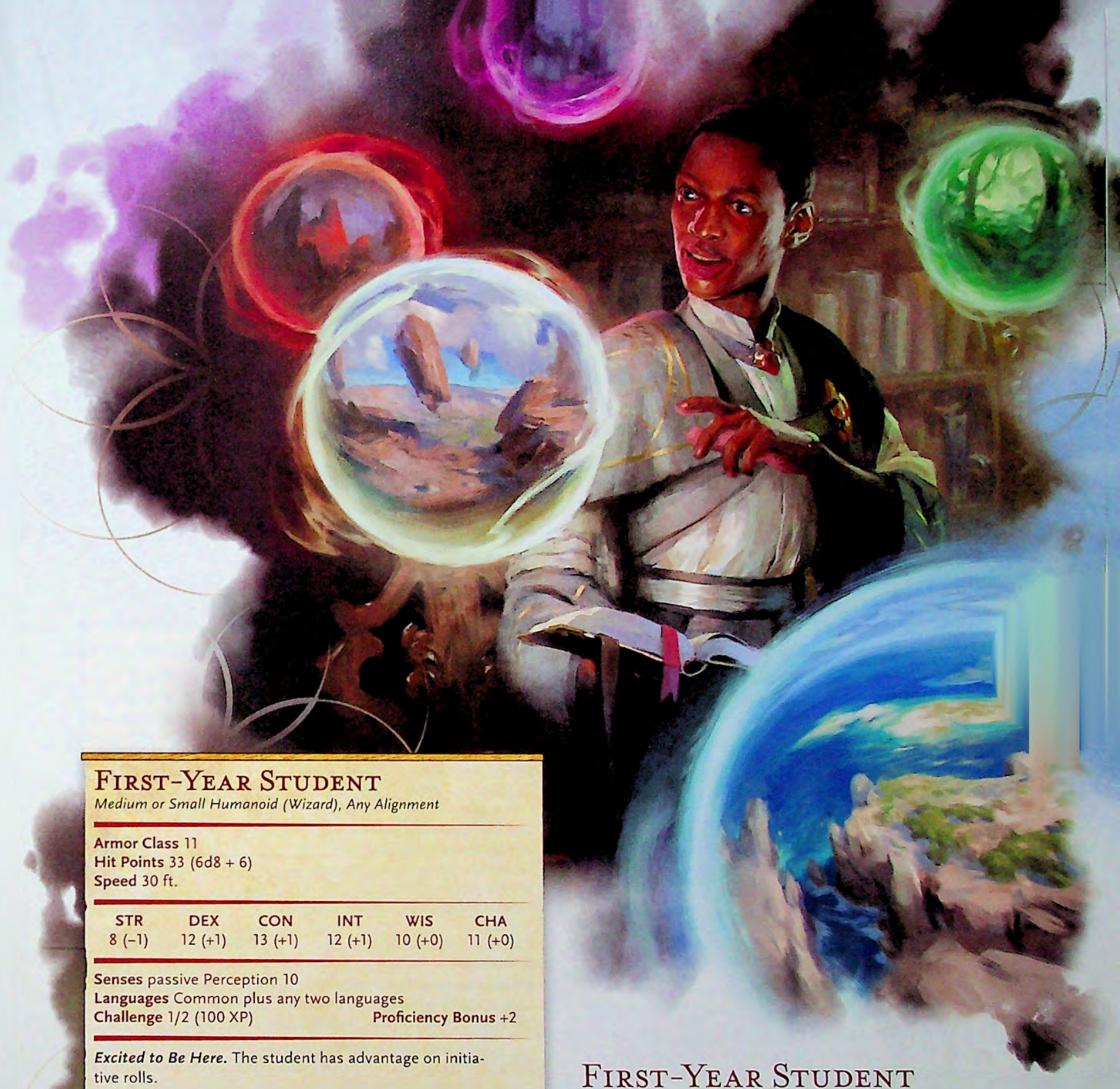
LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The titan can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The titan regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Attack. The titan makes one Claw or Agonizing Bolt attack.

Stalking Nightmare (Costs 2 Actions). The titan uses Teleport, after which it can target one creature within 20 feet of itself that it can see. The target must make a DC 20 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 22 (4d10) necrotic damage, and the titan regains 10 hit points. On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage, and the titan doesn't heal.

Terrorize (Costs 3 Actions). The titan targets one creature it can see within 120 feet of itself. The target must make a DC 20 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 38 (7d10) psychic damage and is frightened of the titan until the end of the target's next turn, and the titan regains 15 hit points. On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage and isn't frightened, and the titan doesn't heal.



First-Year Student

Medium or Small Humanoid (Wizard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 11
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (−1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common plus any two languages
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Excited to Be Here. The student has advantage on initiative rolls.

Actions

Magic Flare. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d12 + 1) force damage.

Spellcasting. The student casts one of the following spells, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 11):

At will: *mage hand, prestidigitation*
1/day: *detect magic*

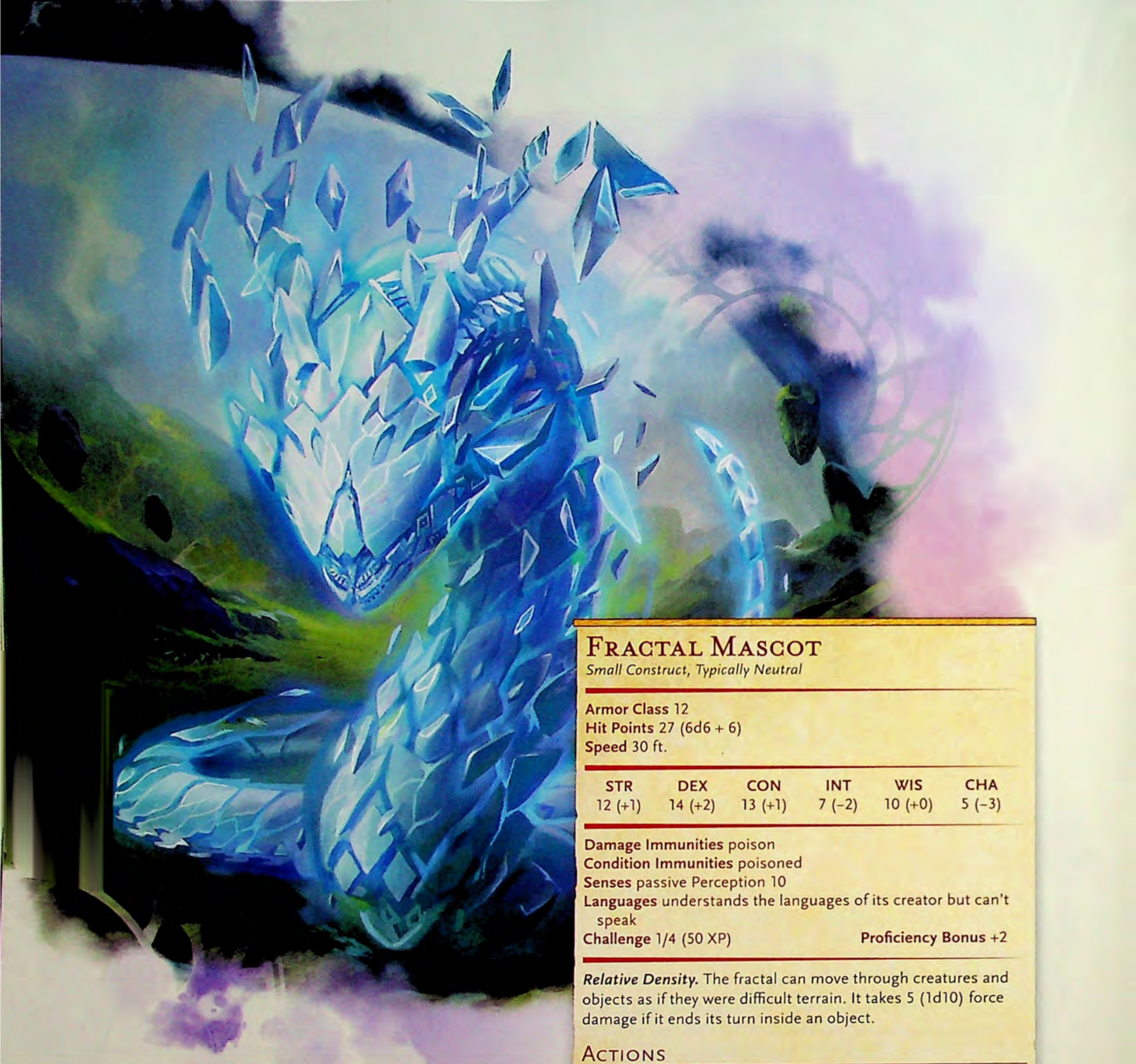
Reactions

Beginner's Luck (2/Day). When the student fails a saving throw, it can reroll the d20. It must use the new roll.

First-Year Student

A student who has not yet chosen one of Strixhaven's five mystic colleges is referred to as a first-year student, after the one year of basic curriculum that most students must complete before selecting their school. These beginner students are taught by faculty from all of Strixhaven's colleges, learning rudimentary magic as they acclimate to the university's environment. Once a student has selected a college, they trade their plain gray first-year uniforms for the trappings of their chosen school and begin honing—or even replacing—the magic they learned in their initial year with other skills.

JOKUBAS UOGINTAS



ANDREAS ZAFIRATOS

FRACTAL MASCOT

To an untrained eye, a fractal mascot looks like a creature made from facets of hard light. But arithmancers know that these fractals are actually living equations: artificial life forms created by extrapolating magic from the mathematical patterns in nature.

Because of their arithmetic basis, fractal mascots can alter both their size and density. Quandrix College has adopted the fractal as its mascot, and many a Quandrix student can be found playing fetch with a fractal companion in between lessons.

FRACTAL MASCOT

Small Construct, Typically Neutral

Armor Class 12
Hit Points 27 (6d6 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	7 (−2)	10 (+0)	5 (−3)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Relative Density. The fractal can move through creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

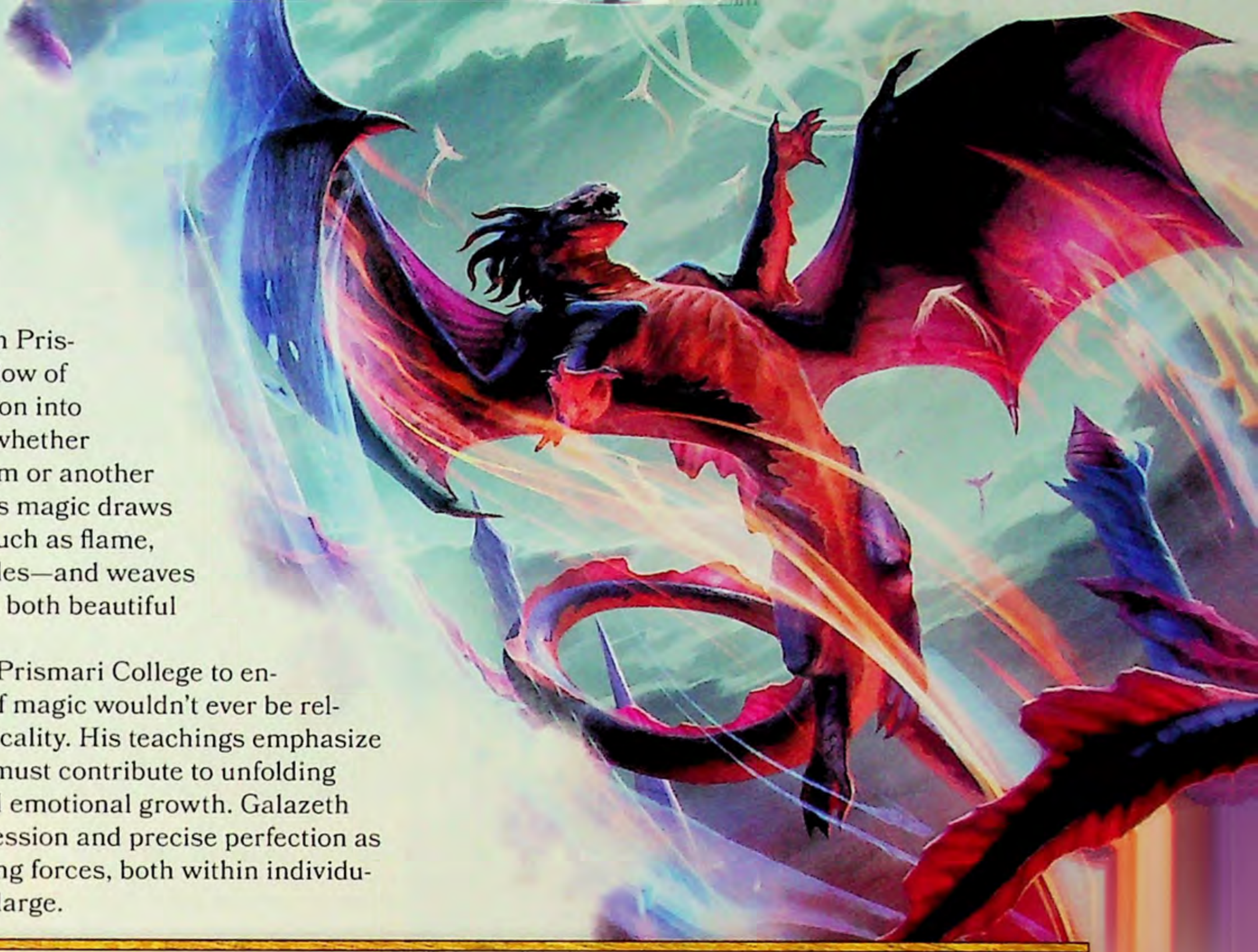
ACTIONS

Quantum Strike. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) force damage, or 6 (2d4 + 1) force damage if the fractal is Medium or bigger.

BONUS ACTIONS

Augment. The fractal's size increases by one category. While the fractal is Medium or bigger, it makes Strength checks and Strength saving throws with advantage. The fractal can become no larger than Huge via this bonus action.

Diminish. The fractal's size decreases by one category. While the fractal is Tiny, it makes attack rolls, Dexterity checks, and Dexterity saving throws with advantage. The fractal can become no smaller than 1 foot in height via this bonus action.



GALAZETH PRISMARI

The dragon Galazeth Prismari embodies the flow of magic from inspiration into artistic expression, whether through physical form or another sensory medium. His magic draws on primal energy—such as flame, lightning, and the tides—and weaves them into spectacles both beautiful and deadly.

Galazeth founded Prismari College to ensure that the study of magic wouldn't ever be relegated to pure practicality. His teachings emphasize that magic's beauty must contribute to unfolding culture and personal emotional growth. Galazeth views dynamic expression and precise perfection as necessarily competing forces, both within individuals and the world at large.

GALAZETH PRISMARI

Gargantuan Dragon (Sorcerer), Chaotic Neutral

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)
Hit Points 402 (23d20 + 161)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	14 (+2)	25 (+7)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	26 (+8)

Saving Throws Dex +9, Con +14, Wis +12, Cha +15
Skills Arcana +18, Acrobatics +16, Performance +22, Perception +12
Damage Resistances lightning
Damage Immunities cold, fire
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 22
Languages Common, Draconic
Challenge 23 (50,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +7

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Galazeth fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Galazeth makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +15 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (1d10 + 8) piercing damage plus 5 (1d10) lightning damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +15 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d6 + 8) slashing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is knocked prone.

Dancing Elements Breath (Recharge 5–6). Galazeth exhales a blast of flames and ice in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw, gaining no benefit from cover (other than total cover) and taking 38 (7d10) fire damage and 38 (7d10) cold damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Spellcasting. Galazeth casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 23):

1/day each: *control water, gust of wind, wall of stone*

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

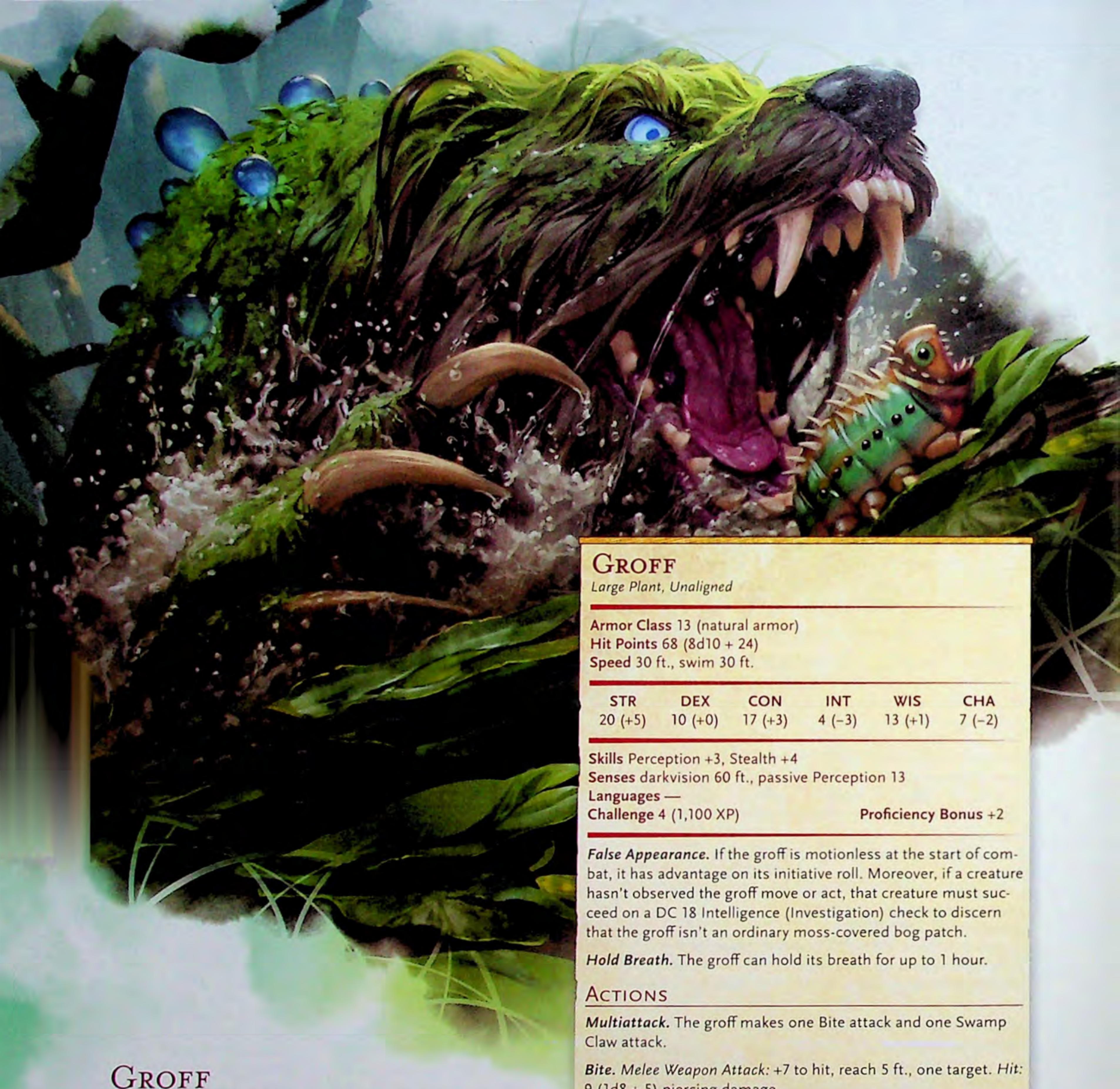
Galazeth can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Galazeth regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Claw. Galazeth makes one Claw attack.

Lightning Flash (Costs 2 Actions). Galazeth moves up to half his flying speed without provoking opportunity attacks. When he passes within 15 feet of a creature during this move, that creature must succeed on a DC 22 Dexterity saving throw or take 11 (2d10) lightning damage. A creature can take this damage no more than once during the move.

Flowing Creation (Costs 3 Actions). Galazeth magically summons 1d4 **art elemental mascots** (in this chapter) in unoccupied spaces he can see within 60 feet of himself. The art elementals obey his commands and take their turns immediately after his. Any creature, other than an art elemental, takes 5 (1d10) cold, fire, or lightning damage (Galazeth's choice) if it ends its turn within 5 feet of one or more of these elementals. When one of these elementals drops to 0 hit points, Galazeth can fly up to 20 feet without provoking opportunity attacks. These elementals disappear after 10 minutes, when Galazeth dies, or when he uses this action again.

RAYMOND SWANLAND



ILSE GORT

GROFF

Many a Strixhaven student wandering the bayou has stepped on a seemingly mundane patch of moss—only to discover that it was the back of a hungry groff lurking beneath the surface. These shaggy swamp creatures have canine faces and glowing blue eyes, and they are ravenous carnivores—with pest mascots being their favorite food. A handful of more intrepid Witherbloom mages have learned to follow groffs in order to track down pest mascots, but most of these mages have yet to find a way to capture the pests before the groff eats someone.

GROFF

Large Plant, Unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)
Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	10 (+0)	17 (+3)	4 (−3)	13 (+1)	7 (−2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages —
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

False Appearance. If the groff is motionless at the start of combat, it has advantage on its initiative roll. Moreover, if a creature hasn't observed the groff move or act, that creature must succeed on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check to discern that the groff isn't an ordinary moss-covered bog patch.

Hold Breath. The groff can hold its breath for up to 1 hour.

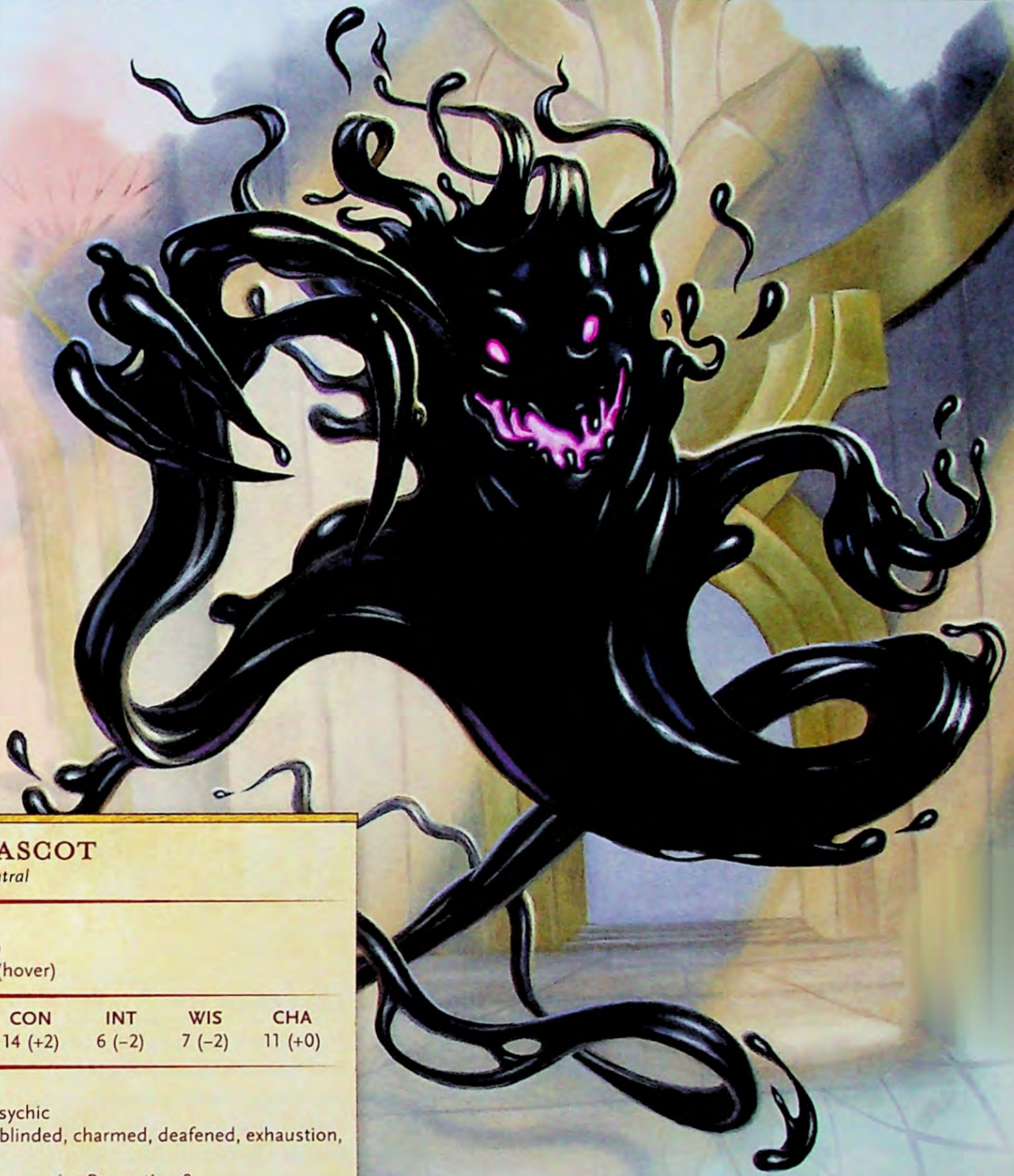
ACTIONS

Multiattack. The groff makes one Bite attack and one Swamp Claw attack.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 + 5) piercing damage.

Swamp Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) slashing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or become engulfed by the groff. While engulfed, the target can't breathe, is restrained, and takes 10 (3d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. When the groff moves, the engulfed target moves with it. The groff can have only one target engulfed at a time.

An engulfed target can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turns. On a success, the target escapes and enters the nearest unoccupied space.



Inkling Mascot

Tiny Ooze, Typically Neutral

Armor Class 13
Hit Points 18 (4d4 + 8)
Speed 10 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	6 (−2)	7 (−2)	11 (+0)

Skills Stealth +5
Damage Immunities psychic
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 8
Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Amorphous. The inkling can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Actions

Blot. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) psychic damage.

Ink Spray (1/Day). The inkling sprays viscous ink at one creature within 15 feet of itself. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of the inkling's next turn.

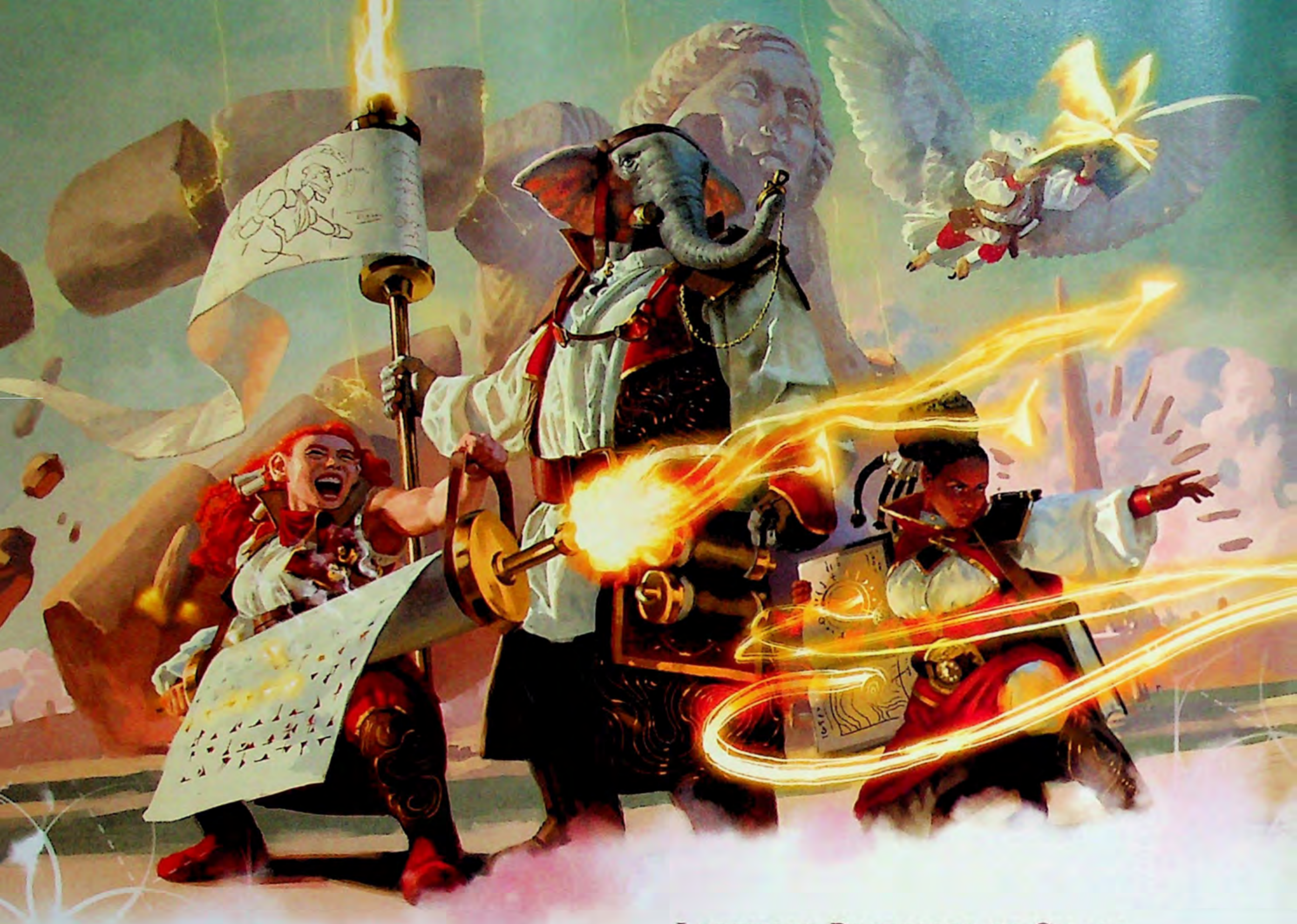
Bonus Actions

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the inkling takes the Hide action.

Inkling Mascot

Squelching slightly as they wriggle through the air, inklings serve as the mascots for Silverquill College. These living blobs of shadowy ink are often summoned by professors who require assistance in their writing workshops—the inklings provide endless ink—or by lonely students hoping for company as they study. However, inklings can just as readily support mages in combat, disrupting opponents' sight.

SCOTT MURPHY



JASON RAINVILLE

LOREHOLD SCHOLARS

The archaeomancers of Lorehold College draw their magical might from the flow of time and fate and the way those forces shape the course of history. Scholars of this broad mystical study divide between those who see history as an unpredictable jumble of chance and those who believe events form a perfect—and predictable—pattern.

LOREHOLD STUDENTS

Deep in crumbling ruins and piles of dusty scrolls, Lorehold students—first as apprentices and then as pledgemages—study the magic of the past, searching for arcane artifacts and speaking with long-dead adventurers to uncover secrets lost to time.

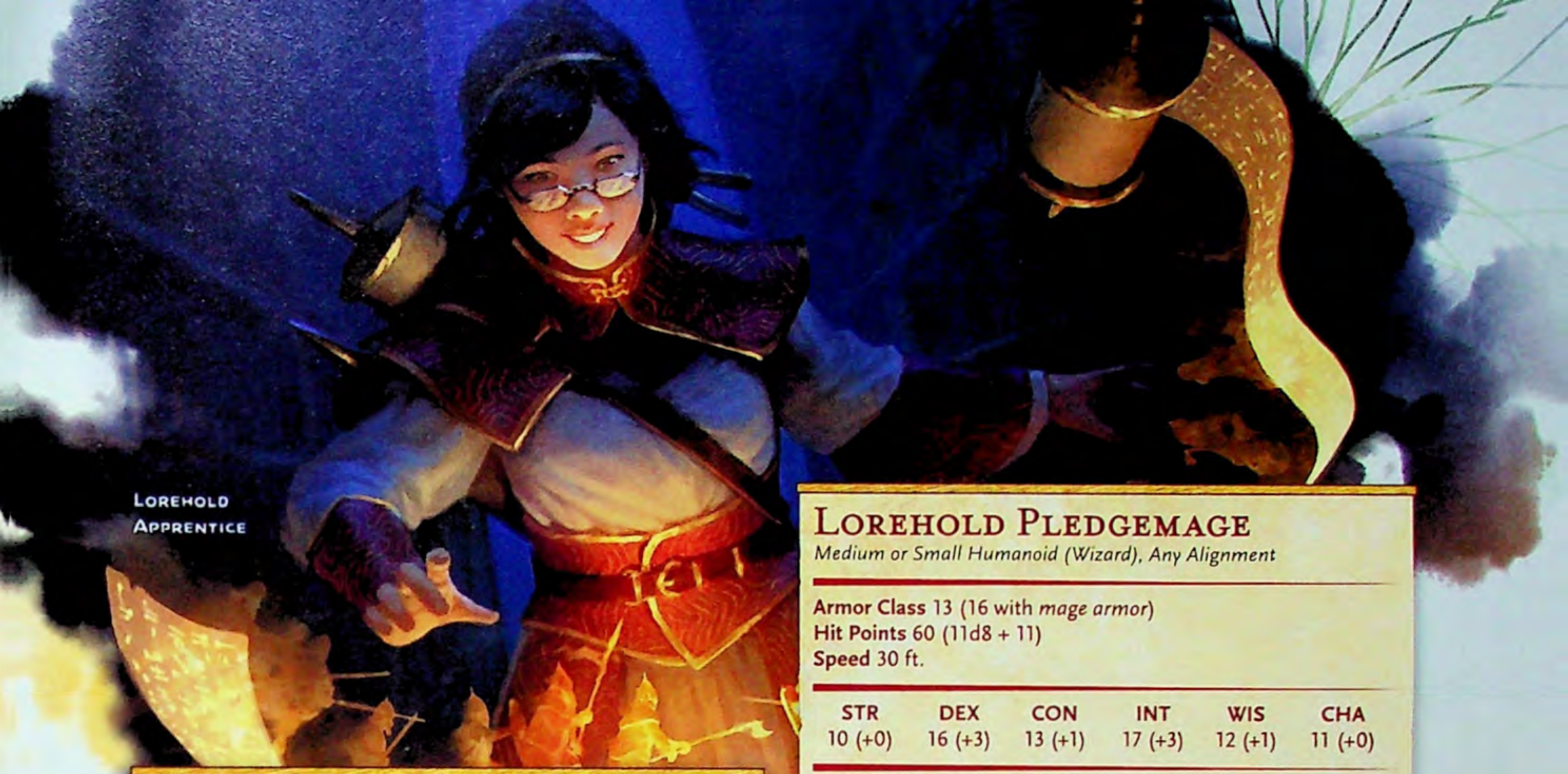
Though many Lorehold students bury themselves in old tomes, others take a more cavalier approach to their studies and travel the world to see history made before their eyes. Their magic can range from spells tampering with the flow of time itself to concussive blasts that break through old ruins—to sometimes just bashing things with a glowing scroll.

LOREHOLD PROFESSOR OF CHAOS

Professors of chaos wield magic inspired by the ebb and flow of chance. They study the course history has taken, looking for breaking points in the flow of events, and focus their magic into creating breaks that are to their advantage. Whether those breaks are in a series of events, in obstacles, or in enemies depends on the needs in the moment. They crush enemies' plans under the weight of time and lash out with magical energy that often takes the appearance of books, scrolls, and sheets of parchment.

LOREHOLD PROFESSOR OF ORDER

Lorehold's professors of order search for evidence of patterns and predictable outcomes in history. They study the flow of events, learning which occurrences herald specific outcomes, and they trace their magic through those paths of causality. In their exploration of ruins, professors of order shore up dangerous structures and find the safest paths as they search. When confronted, they confound their foes by channeling the stasis of perfect order, creating resilient barriers of force and quashing hostile magic.



LOREHOLD APPRENTICE

LOREHOLD APPRENTICE

Medium or Small Humanoid (Wizard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 33 (6d8 + 6)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +3, Int +4
Skills History +6, Insight +3, Investigation +6
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common plus any two languages
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

ACTIONS

Scroll Bash. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 9 (2d8) thunder damage.

Reduce to Memory (Recharge 6). Thundering golden energy erupts around a creature the apprentice can see within 90 feet of it. The creature must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 33 (6d10) thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A Construct has disadvantage on the saving throw.

Spellcasting. The apprentice casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 12):

At will: *guidance, light*
1/day each: *comprehend languages, locate object, mage armor*

REACTIONS

Learn from the Past (2/Day). When another creature within 60 feet of the apprentice misses a target with an attack roll, the apprentice magically enables the attacker to reroll the attack roll. It must use the new roll.

LOREHOLD PLEDGEMAGE

Medium or Small Humanoid (Wizard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 13 (16 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 60 (11d8 + 11)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +3, Int +5
Skills History +7, Insight +3, Investigation +7
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common plus any two languages
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The pledgemage makes two Scroll Bash attacks.

Scroll Bash. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 9 (2d8) thunder damage.

Reduce to Memory (Recharge 5–6). Thundering golden energy erupts around a creature the pledgemage can see within 90 feet of it. The creature must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 44 (8d10) thunder damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. A Construct has disadvantage on the saving throw.

Spellcasting. The pledgemage casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13):

At will: *guidance, light*
2/day each: *comprehend languages, locate object*
1/day each: *mage armor, speak with dead, stone shape*

BONUS ACTIONS

Chronal Break (1/Day). The pledgemage chooses a point within 30 feet of itself, shunting the minds of nearby creatures out of this moment in time. Each creature in a 10-foot-radius sphere centered on that point must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be incapacitated until the end of the pledgemage's next turn.

REACTIONS

Learn from the Past (2/Day). When another creature within 60 feet of the pledgemage misses a target with an attack roll, the pledgemage magically enables the attacker to reroll the attack roll. It must use the new roll.

MANUEL CASTAÑON

LOREHOLD PROFESSOR OF CHAOS

Medium or Small Humanoid (Wizard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 110 (17d8 + 34)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +5, Int +7, Wis +5, Cha +4
Skills Arcana +7, History +7, Perception +5
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Common plus any four languages
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Voice from the Past (1/Day). The professor can cast the *contact other plane* spell to contact a long-dead spirit, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The professor makes two Spectral Scroll attacks. It can also use Weight of History, if available.

Spectral Scroll. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) force damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Spellcasting. The professor casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability:

At will: *comprehend languages, dancing lights, guidance*
2/day each: *locate object, mage armor, passwall*

Weight of History (Recharge 5–6). The professor magically compresses time around up to six creatures of its choice that it can see within 30 feet of itself. Each target must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or be restrained for 1 minute, but the restrained target's speed is halved instead of being reduced to 0. At the start of each of its turns, the restrained target takes 4 (1d8) force damage. A restrained target can repeat the save at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

LOREHOLD PROFESSOR OF ORDER

Medium or Small Humanoid (Wizard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +5, Int +7, Wis +5, Cha +4
Skills Arcana +7, History +7, Perception +5
Damage Resistances force
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Common plus any four languages
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Voice from the Past (1/Day). The professor can cast the *contact other plane* spell to contact a long-dead spirit, using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The professor makes two Repelling Burst attacks. It can also use Force Barrier, if available.

Repelling Burst. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) force damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet directly away from the professor and become restrained until the start of professor's next turn.

Force Barrier (Recharge 5–6). The professor magically creates a wall of translucent, golden force within 90 feet of itself. The wall lasts for 1 minute or until the professor uses this action again. The barrier can be a vertical or horizontal plane up to 30 feet on a side or a 10-foot-radius hemispherical dome with a floor. The wall provides total cover. It has AC 17, 30 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

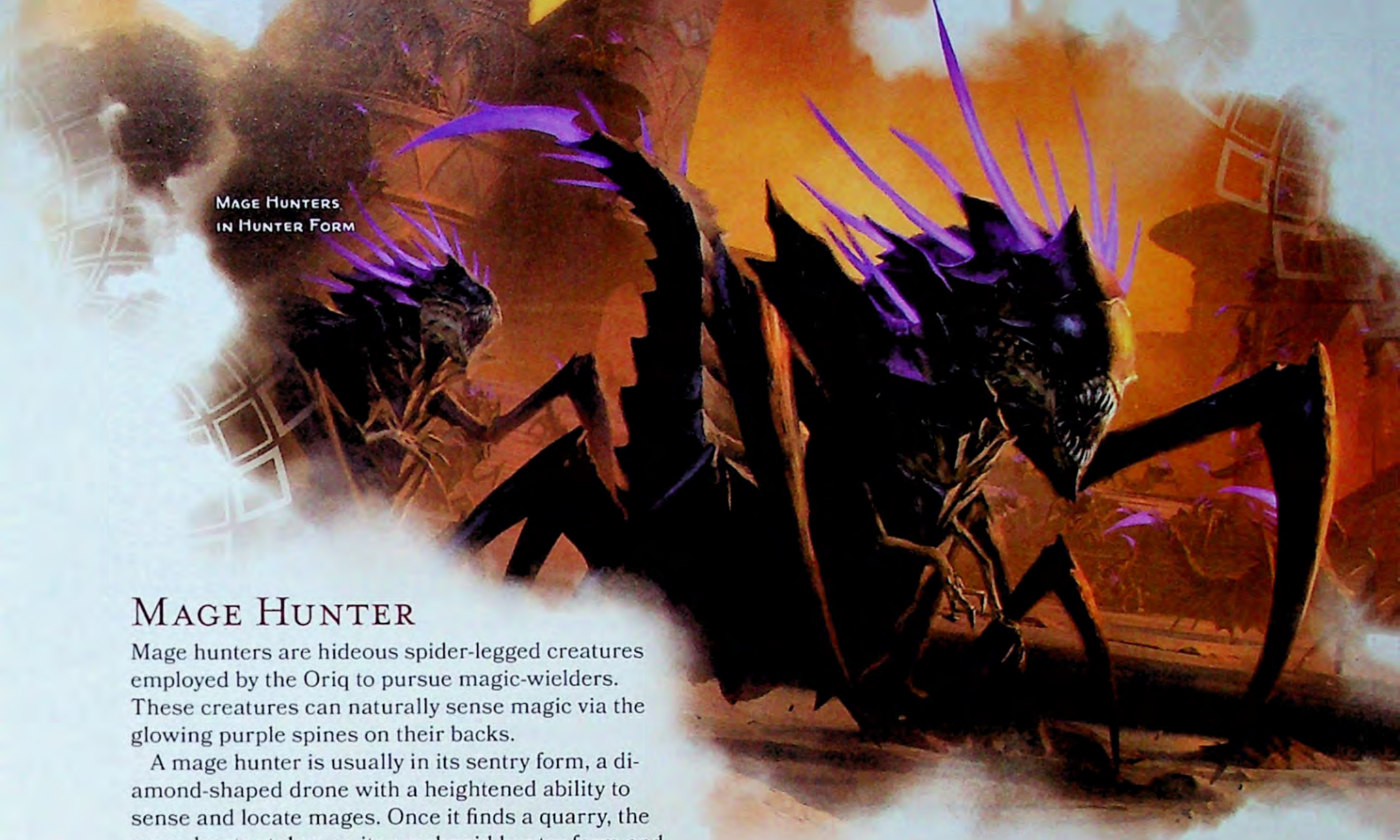
Spellcasting. The professor casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *comprehend languages, guidance, light*
2/day each: *dimension door, locate object, mage armor, stone shape*

REACTIONS

Arcane Stasis (2/Day). When a creature the professor can see within 60 feet of it casts a spell, the professor can magically lock the casting in the moment before completion. The spellcaster must succeed on a DC 15 saving throw using the spell's spellcasting ability, or the spell fails and is wasted.

LIE SETIAWAN



Mage Hunters in Hunter Form

Mage Hunter

Mage hunters are hideous spider-legged creatures employed by the Oriq to pursue magic-wielders. These creatures can naturally sense magic via the glowing purple spines on their backs.

A mage hunter is usually in its sentry form, a diamond-shaped drone with a heightened ability to sense and locate mages. Once it finds a quarry, the mage hunter takes on its arachnoid hunter form and pursues its targets with vicious skill.

Mage Hunter

Large Monstrosity, Typically Lawful Evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 85 (10d10 + 30)
Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft. (hunter form only), fly 10 ft. (hover, sentry form only)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +3, Wis +6, Cha +3
Skills Perception +9, Stealth +5
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, frightened, prone
Senses blindsight 120 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 19
Languages understands Common but can't speak
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Magic Sense. The hunter knows the location of every spellcaster, active spell, and magic item within 120 feet of itself.

Spider Climb (Hunter Form Only). The hunter can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

Multiattack (Hunter Form Only). The hunter makes two Claw attacks.

Claw (Hunter Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (4d8 + 4) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the hunter can't make a Tail attack against another target.

Mage Tracker (Sentry Form Only). The hunter emits a pulse of energy that helps it better locate its magical quarry. Each creature within 120 feet of the hunter that has the ability to cast spells must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be mystically marked by the hunter for 1 hour.

While marked, a creature can't become hidden from the hunter and gains no benefit from the invisible condition against the hunter. Additionally, while a marked creature is on the same plane of existence as the hunter, the hunter always knows the distance and direction to the creature.

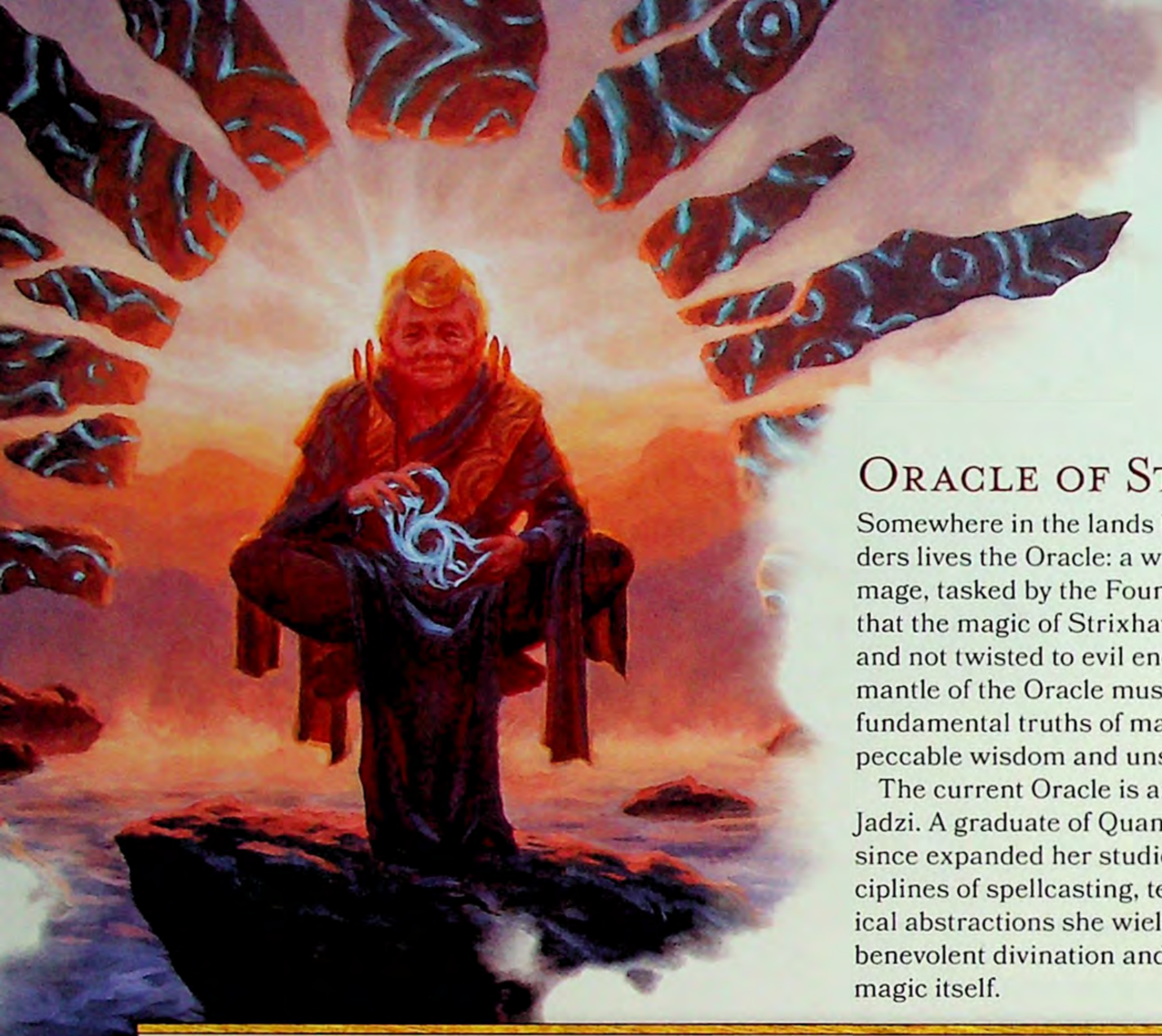
Bonus Actions

Shift Form. The hunter folds into its drone-like sentry form or unfolds into its hunter form. Its game statistics are the same in each form.

Reactions

Consume and Destroy. When the hunter takes damage from a spell, it takes only half the triggering damage (rounded down). If the creature that cast the spell is within 60 feet of the hunter, that creature must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take the other half of the damage.

LIE SETIAWAN



ORACLE OF STRIXHAVEN

Somewhere in the lands beyond Strixhaven's borders lives the Oracle: a wise and accomplished mage, tasked by the Founder Dragons to ensure that the magic of Strixhaven is used to help others and not twisted to evil ends. The one who holds the mantle of the Oracle must not only understand the fundamental truths of magic, but also possess impeccable wisdom and unshakable virtue.

The current Oracle is an elderly human named Jadzi. A graduate of Quandrix College, Jadzi has since expanded her studies to encompass all disciplines of spellcasting, tempering the mathematical abstractions she wielded at Strixhaven with benevolent divination and a return to the basics of magic itself.

ORACLE OF STRIXHAVEN

Medium Humanoid (Human, Wizard), Neutral Good

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 150 (20d8 + 60)
Speed 30 ft., fly 15 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	21 (+5)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Con +8, Int +10, Wis +10, Cha +9
Skills Arcana +15, Insight +15, Investigation +15, Nature +10, Perception +10
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses passive Perception 20
Languages all
Challenge 15 (13,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +5

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If the Oracle fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Oracle makes two Magic Flare attacks. She can also use Paradoxy, if available.

Magic Flare. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (3d12 + 5) force damage.

Paradoxy (Recharge 4–6). Momentary warps in reality appear at three different points the Oracle can see within 120 feet of her. Each creature in a 20-foot-radius sphere centered on each point must make a DC 18 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 33 (6d10) force damage and is pulled up to 15 feet in a straight line toward the center of the sphere. On a successful save, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't pulled. A creature caught in the area of multiple warps is affected by only one, which the Oracle chooses.

Spellcasting. The Oracle casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 18):

At will: *detect magic*
2/day each: *dispel magic, mage armor, remove curse, sending*
1/day each: *power word stun, scrying* (as an action), *wall of force*

Teleport. The Oracle teleports, along with any equipment she is wearing or carrying, to an unoccupied space she can see within 60 feet of herself.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

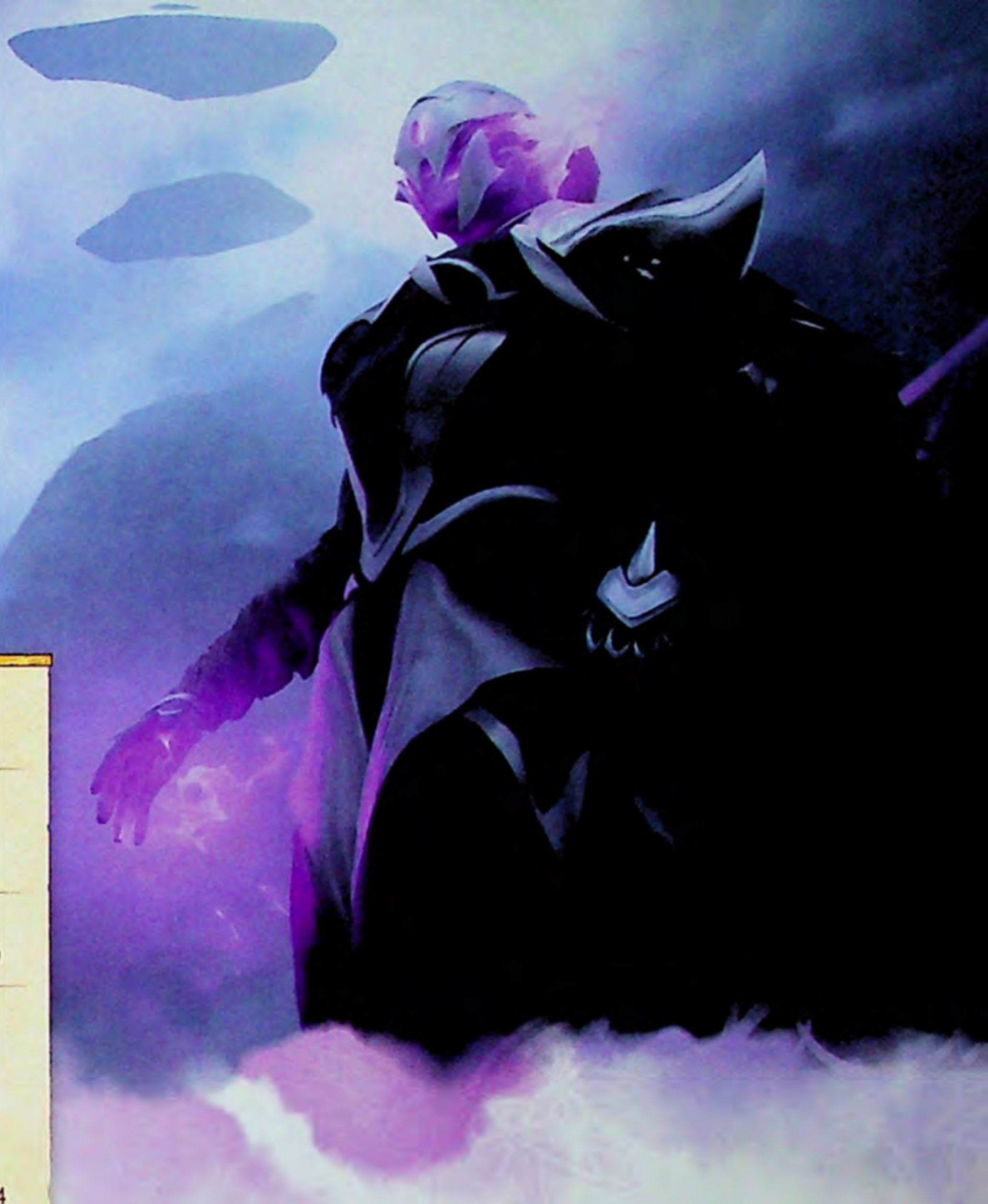
The Oracle can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Oracle regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Vector Shift. The Oracle teleports one creature she can see within 60 feet of herself, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, to an unoccupied space within 30 feet of herself. An unwilling target must succeed on a DC 18 Charisma saving throw to avoid the effect.

Spellcasting (Costs 2 Actions). The Oracle uses Spellcasting.

Vortex Jaunt (Costs 2 Actions). The Oracle uses Teleport, and immediately after she disappears, each creature within 30 feet of the space she left must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or take 16 (3d10) force damage.

CHRIS RAHN



JIHUN

ORIQ BLOOD MAGE

Medium Humanoid (Warlock), Typically Neutral Evil

Armor Class 16 (Blood Aegis)
Hit Points 127 (15d8 + 60)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +8, Int +9, Wis +5, Cha +5
Skills Deception +9, Medicine +5, Survival +5
Damage Resistances necrotic
Condition Immunities exhaustion
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common plus any four languages
Challenge 9 (5,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +4

Blood Aegis. The AC of the blood mage includes its Constitution modifier while it isn't wearing armor or wielding a shield.

Oriq Mask. The blood mage wears an Oriq mask. While wearing the mask, the blood mage can't be targeted by any divination magic or perceived through magical scrying sensors, and it adds double its proficiency bonus to Charisma (Deception) checks (included above).

Sanguine Sense. While the blood mage isn't blinded, it can see any creature that isn't an Undead or a Construct within 60 feet of itself, even through total cover, heavily obscured areas, invisibility, or any other phenomena that would prevent sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The blood mage makes two Blood Lash attacks.

Blood Lash. *Melee Spell Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it can't regain hit points until the start of the blood mage's next turn.

Blood Boil (Recharge 4–6). The blood mage chooses a point within 150 feet of itself, and a 20-foot radius sphere centered on that point fills with a burst of searing, blood-red mist. Each creature of the blood mage's choice that it can see in that area must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 38 (7d10) necrotic damage and is incapacitated until the end of its next turn. On a success, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't incapacitated. A creature dies if reduced to 0 hit points by this necrotic damage.

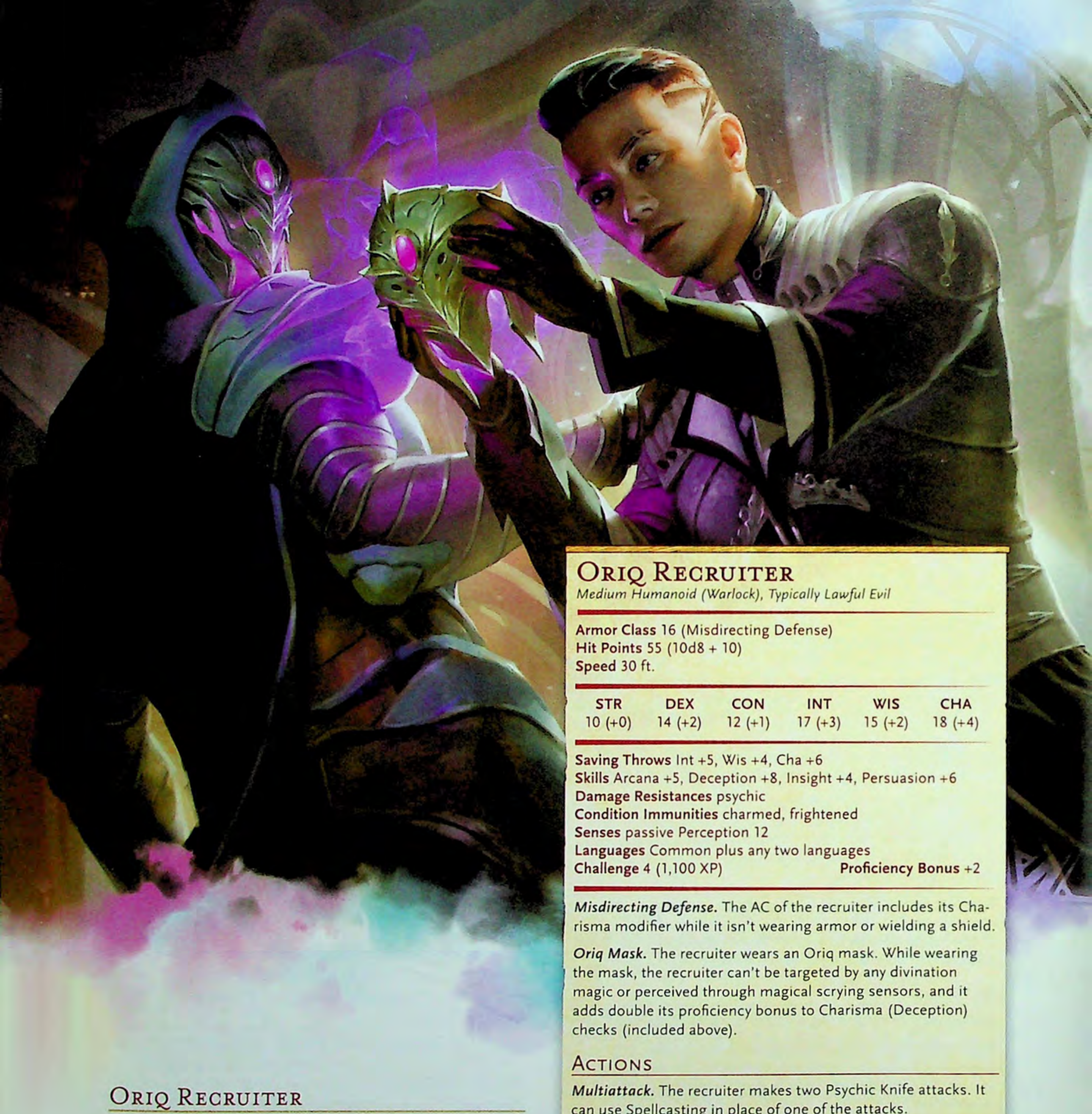
ORIQ

The Oriq are a secret society of mages who wield forbidden magic in the service of their leader, Extus Narr. Narr was in consideration for elevation to the role of Oracle of Strixhaven, but when the Founder Dragons passed him over in favor of Jadzi, his bitterness knew no bounds. He now uses the Oriq to gather the spells and magical energy he needs to summon a devastating being, the Blood Avatar, to destroy Strixhaven.

The Oriq work in secret, infiltrating Strixhaven to search for the magic their master covets and watch for impressionable students and embittered faculty they might turn to their cause. The Oriq take pains to hide their true allegiance and wear masks to hide their identities. These masks have magical properties that function only for their intended wearers.

ORIQ BLOOD MAGE

Oriq blood mages create deadly weapons formed of their own blood. They can also sense the life energy within nearby creatures, making the blood mages almost impossible to ambush.



BILLY CHRISTIAN

ORIQ RECRUITER

Oriq recruiters are subtle mages who infiltrate Strixhaven in service to their order. They are adept at blending in, watching for powerful but underperforming mages and students who have fallen through the cracks of the institution. The recruiters approach and befriend these individuals either as potential recruits to the Oriq or as assets who can help the Oriq acquire spells, rare spell components, or knowledge from Strixhaven.

ORIQ RECRUITER

Medium Humanoid (Warlock), Typically Lawful Evil

Armor Class 16 (Misdirecting Defense)
Hit Points 55 (10d8 + 10)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +4, Cha +6
Skills Arcana +5, Deception +8, Insight +4, Persuasion +6
Damage Resistances psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common plus any two languages
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Misdirecting Defense. The AC of the recruiter includes its Charisma modifier while it isn't wearing armor or wielding a shield.

Oriq Mask. The recruiter wears an Oriq mask. While wearing the mask, the recruiter can't be targeted by any divination magic or perceived through magical scrying sensors, and it adds double its proficiency bonus to Charisma (Deception) checks (included above).

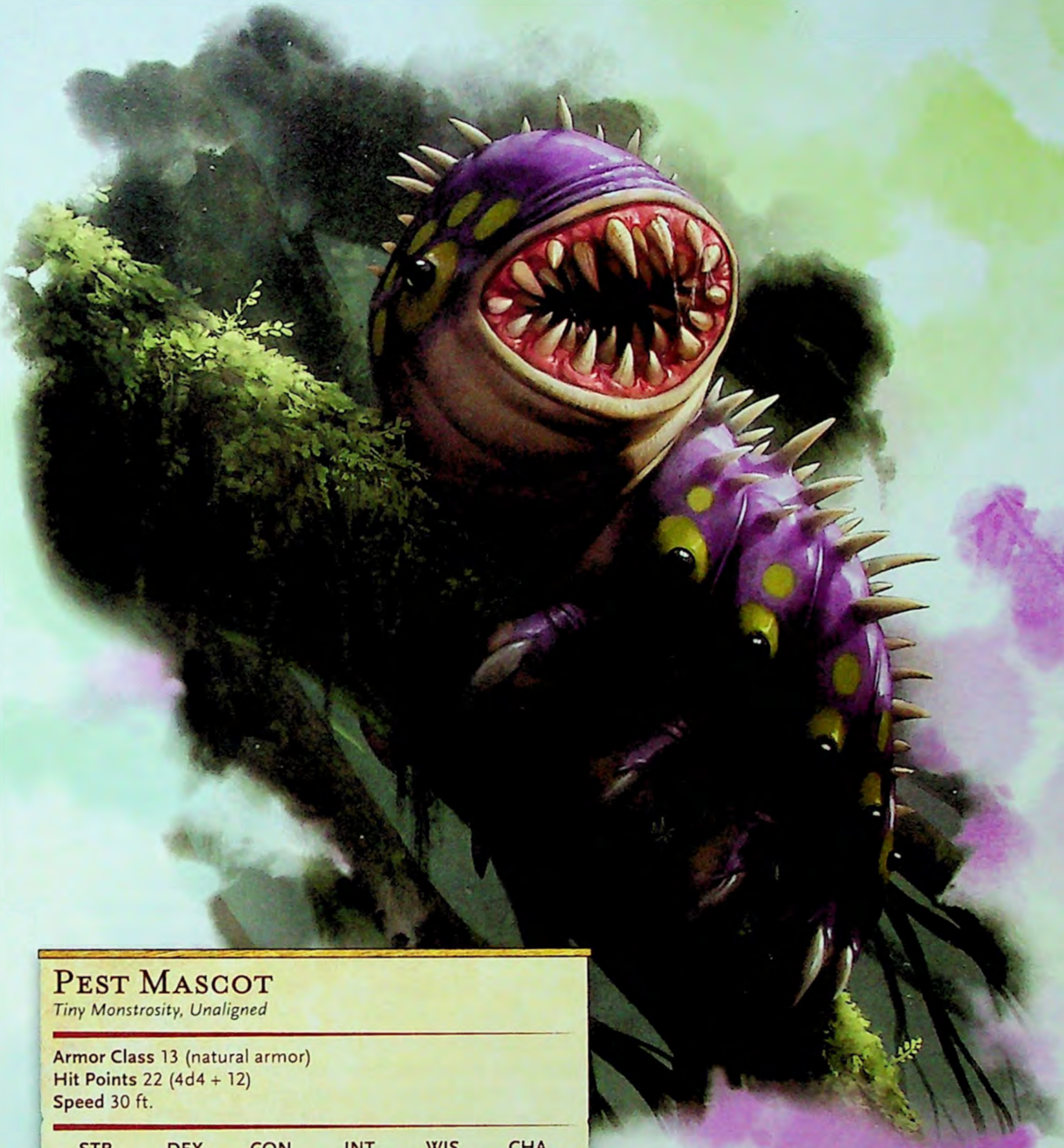
ACTIONS

Multiattack. The recruiter makes two Psychic Knife attacks. It can use Spellcasting in place of one of the attacks.

Psychic Knife. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 21 (5d6 + 4) psychic damage.

Spellcasting. The recruiter casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 14):

At will: *disguise self, silent image*
2/day: *charm person*
1/day: *suggestion*



ILSE GORT

PEST MASCOT

Tiny Monstrosity, Unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 22 (4d4 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	5 (−3)	13 (+1)	4 (−3)

Skills Perception +3
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13
Languages —
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Regeneration. The pest regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point. If it takes fire damage, this trait doesn't function at the start of the pest's next turn.

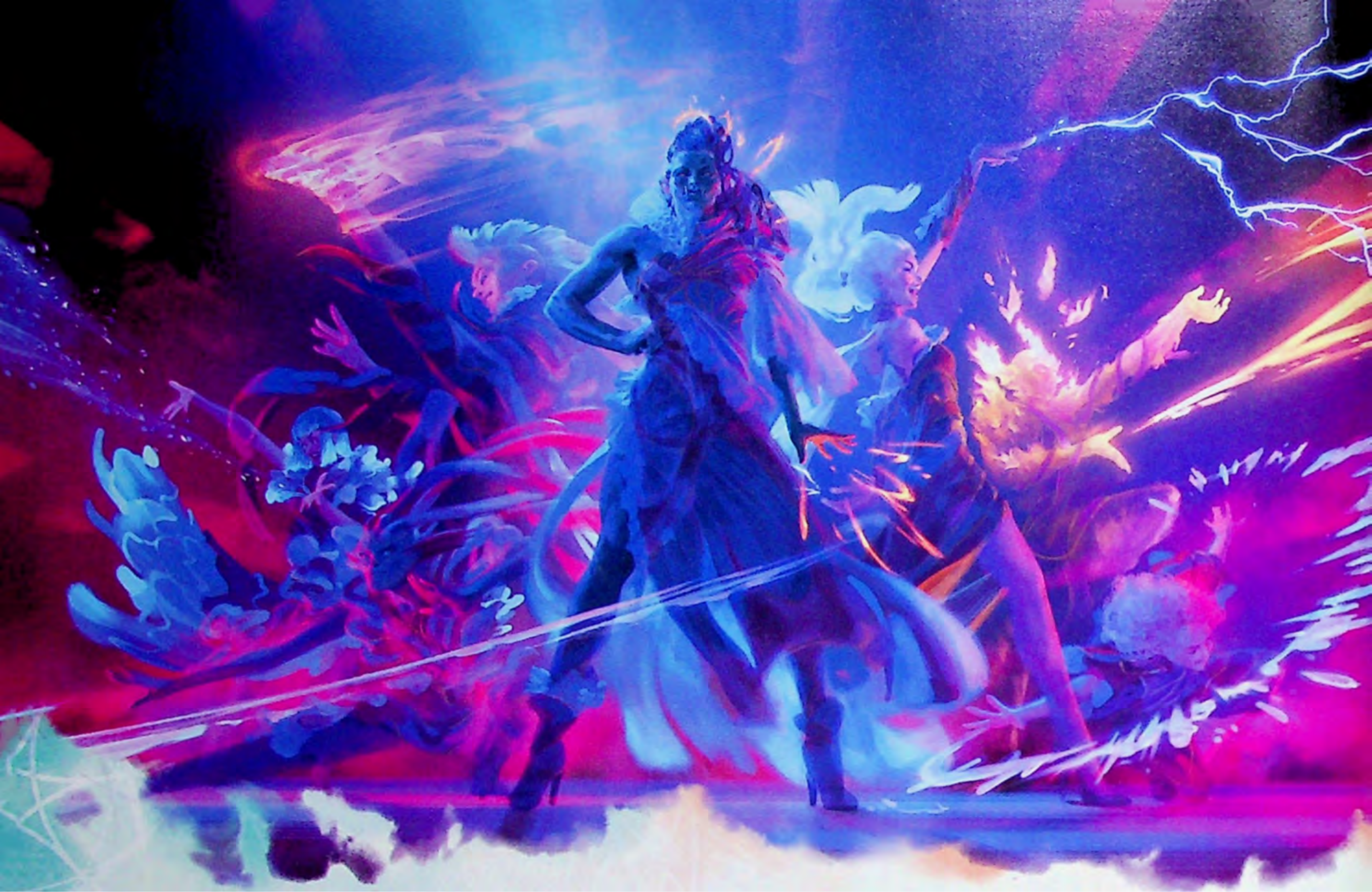
Spiny Hide. At the start of each of its turns, the pest deals 2 (1d4) piercing damage to any creature grappling it or that it is grappling.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

PEST MASCOT

Grumpy, spiky, and generally irritating, pest mascots inhabit the muggy bayou of Sedgemoor. However, these ferret-sized swamp creatures hold deep wells of life essence, making them convenient fuel sources for the magic of Witherbloom mages. As such, many Witherbloom students have adopted pests from the bayou as pets, and pests, in all their spiny glory, have become the mascots of the college.



JOHANNES VOSS

PRISMARI SCHOLARS

The scholars of Prismari College believe that art is the truest form of spellcraft. They use magic to make splendid art, and they employ artistry to make their magic spectacular.

PRISMARI STUDENTS

The students of Prismari College—first as apprentices and then as pledgemages—see no distinction between magic and art. No two Prismari students have the same style of spellcasting; each wields the elemental magic taught by the college in a way that expresses their personality. In the hands of Prismari students, spells that conjure fire or bend water to one's will become vibrant and expressive showcases, thrumming with creative energy.

Harnessing the elemental forces of their magic requires precision and grace, and some students dedicate themselves to chasing the ideal of perfect control, hoping that by doing so, they can accurately express what is churning within their minds.

PRISMARI PROFESSOR OF EXPRESSION

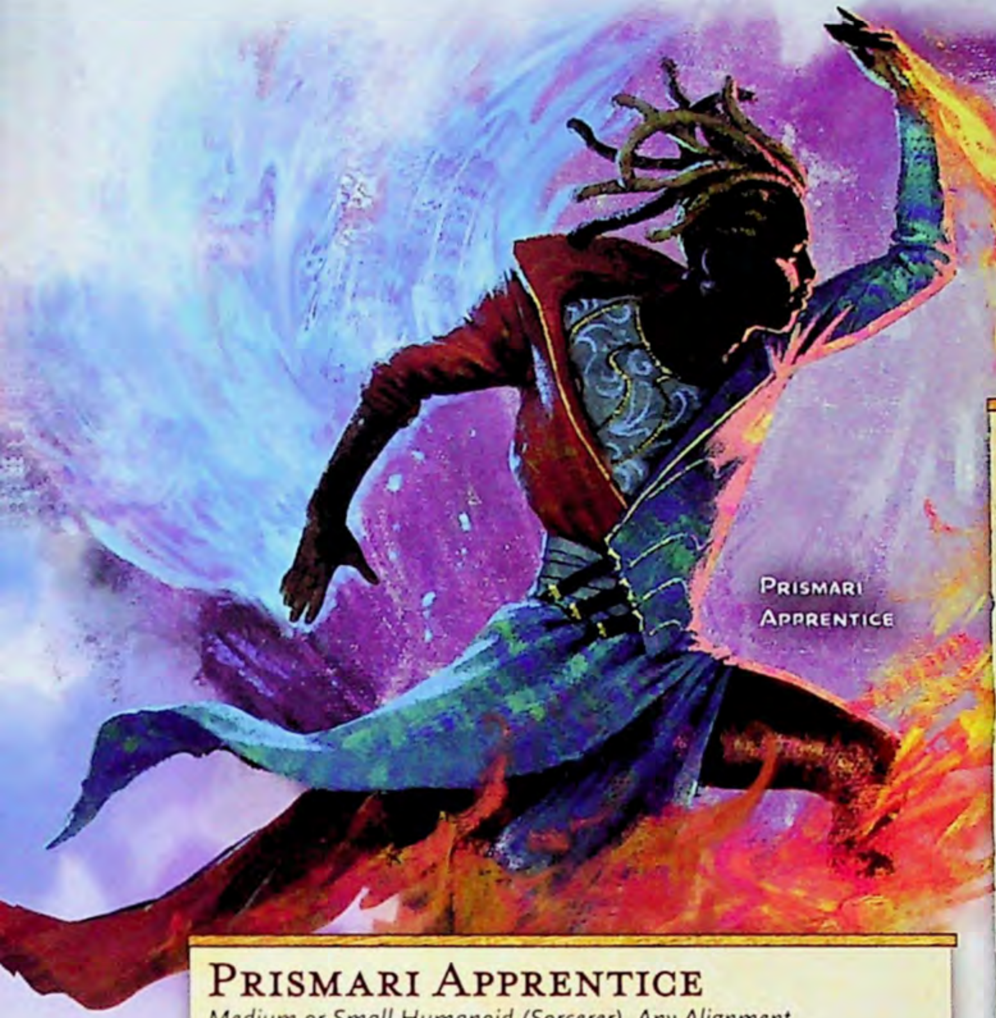
Professors of expression embody the flare of Prismari magic. Using continuous motion, fluid grace, and interweaving steps, these teachers channel the elements of wind, flame, and lightning to accompany them. Their magic is fast and beautiful, which becomes swift death in battle, mesmerizing in its energetic flow. Devastating lightning strikes and searing lashes of flame meet the professors' foes head on.

Professors who embrace the Prismari philosophy of expression focus on magic becoming art in the moment. Whether to create a spectacle that an audience will never forget or to strike down their foes in a flash, these teachers impress upon their students the beauty of creation.

PRISMARI PROFESSOR OF PERFECTION

Professors of perfection combine elemental magic with precise, forceful physical motion. Their sweeping gestures and dance-like steps gather the power of crashing waves, conjure the protection of unyielding stone, and shape great structures of ice. Binding and channeling these natural elements allow the professors to mold their environment to their needs, both for breathtaking performances and to control the fabric of a battlefield against their foes.

These teachers stress attention to fine details, drilling their students on the most minuscule points. The perfect foundation ultimately leads to a flawless work of art, and the professors of perfection produce sculptural and architectural marvels.



Prismari Apprentice

Medium or Small Humanoid (Sorcerer), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Cha +4
Skills Acrobatics +4, Athletics +4, Performance +6
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common plus any two languages
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Actions

Elemental Strike. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (3d6) fire or cold damage (the apprentice's choice).

Spellcasting. The apprentice casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 12):

At will: *minor illusion*
1/day each: *gust of wind, mage armor, silent image*

Bonus Actions

Surge of Artistry (Recharge 4–6). The apprentice moves up to its speed, surrounding itself with elemental magic as it moves. Until the end of its turn, the apprentice can move through the space of other creatures. The first time the apprentice enters a creature's space on a turn, that creature must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone. If the apprentice ends its turn in another creature's space, the apprentice takes 5 (1d10) force damage and is pushed into the nearest unoccupied space.

Prismari Pledgemage

Medium or Small Humanoid (Sorcerer), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)
Speed 35 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Cha +5
Skills Acrobatics +4, Athletics +4, Performance +7
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common plus any two languages
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Evasion. If the pledgemage is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the pledgemage instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw and only half damage if it fails, provided it isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Multiattack. The pledgemage makes two Elemental Strike attacks.

Elemental Strike. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (3d6 + 2) fire or cold damage (the pledgemage's choice).

Showstopper (1/Day). The pledgemage shines with elemental magic, targeting one creature it can see within 60 feet of itself. The target must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 28 (8d6) fire or cold damage (the pledgemage's choice) and is stunned until the start of the pledgemage's next turn. On a successful save, the target takes half as much damage and isn't stunned.

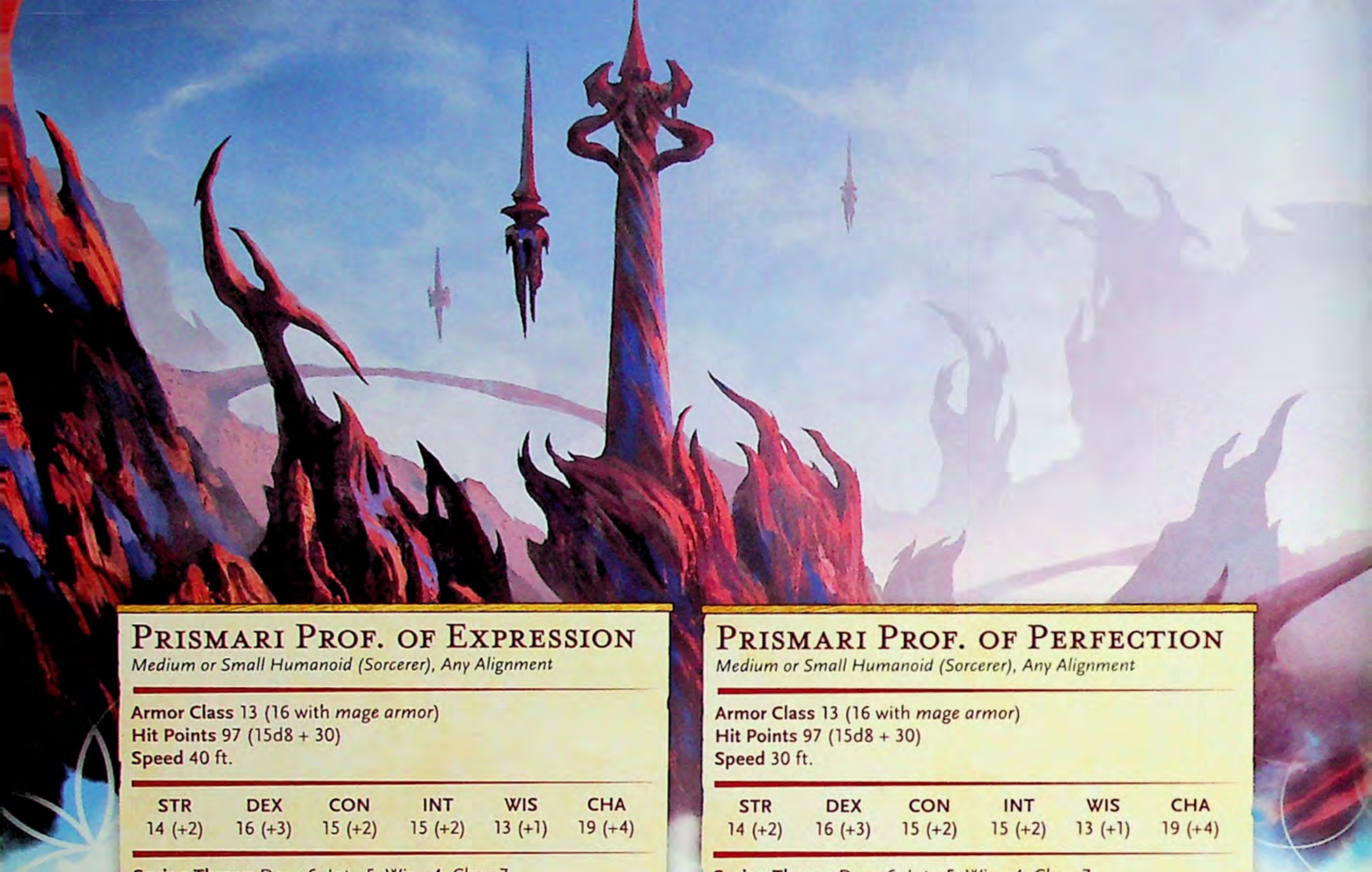
Spellcasting. The pledgemage casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13):

At will: *minor illusion*
2/day each: *gust of wind, silent image*
1/day each: *mage armor, water walk*

Bonus Actions

Surge of Artistry (Recharge 4–6). The pledgemage moves up to its speed, surrounding itself with elemental magic as it moves. Until the end of its turn, the pledgemage can move through the space of other creatures. The first time the pledgemage enters a creature's space on a turn, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone. If the pledgemage ends its turn in another creature's space, the pledgemage takes 5 (1d10) force damage and is pushed into the nearest unoccupied space.

IGOR KIERYLUK



JONAS DE RO

PRISMARI PROF. OF EXPRESSION

Medium or Small Humanoid (Sorcerer), Any Alignment

Armor Class 13 (16 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 97 (15d8 + 30)
Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +5, Wis +4, Cha +7
Skills Acrobatics +6, Arcana +5, Athletics +5, Perception +4, Performance +10
Damage Resistances fire, lightning
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common plus any four languages
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The professor makes three Cinder Strike attacks.

Cinder Strike. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) fire damage.

Lightning Flourish (Recharge 6). The professor unleashes arcs of magical lightning at up to two creatures it can see within 60 feet of itself. Each target must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Spellcasting. The professor casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *minor illusion*
2/day each: *fog cloud, gust of wind, mage armor*

BONUS ACTIONS

Flaming Leap. The professor is wreathed in flames and jumps up to 30 feet in any direction. When the professor lands, the flames erupt in a 10-foot radius around the professor and then vanish. Each creature of the professor's choice in that area must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) fire damage.

PRISMARI PROF. OF PERFECTION

Medium or Small Humanoid (Sorcerer), Any Alignment

Armor Class 13 (16 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 97 (15d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +6, Int +5, Wis +4, Cha +7
Skills Acrobatics +6, Arcana +5, Athletics +5, Perception +4, Performance +10
Damage Resistances cold
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common plus any four languages
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Water Walking. The professor can walk across water and other liquids as if they were solid ground.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The professor makes three Tidal Strike attacks.

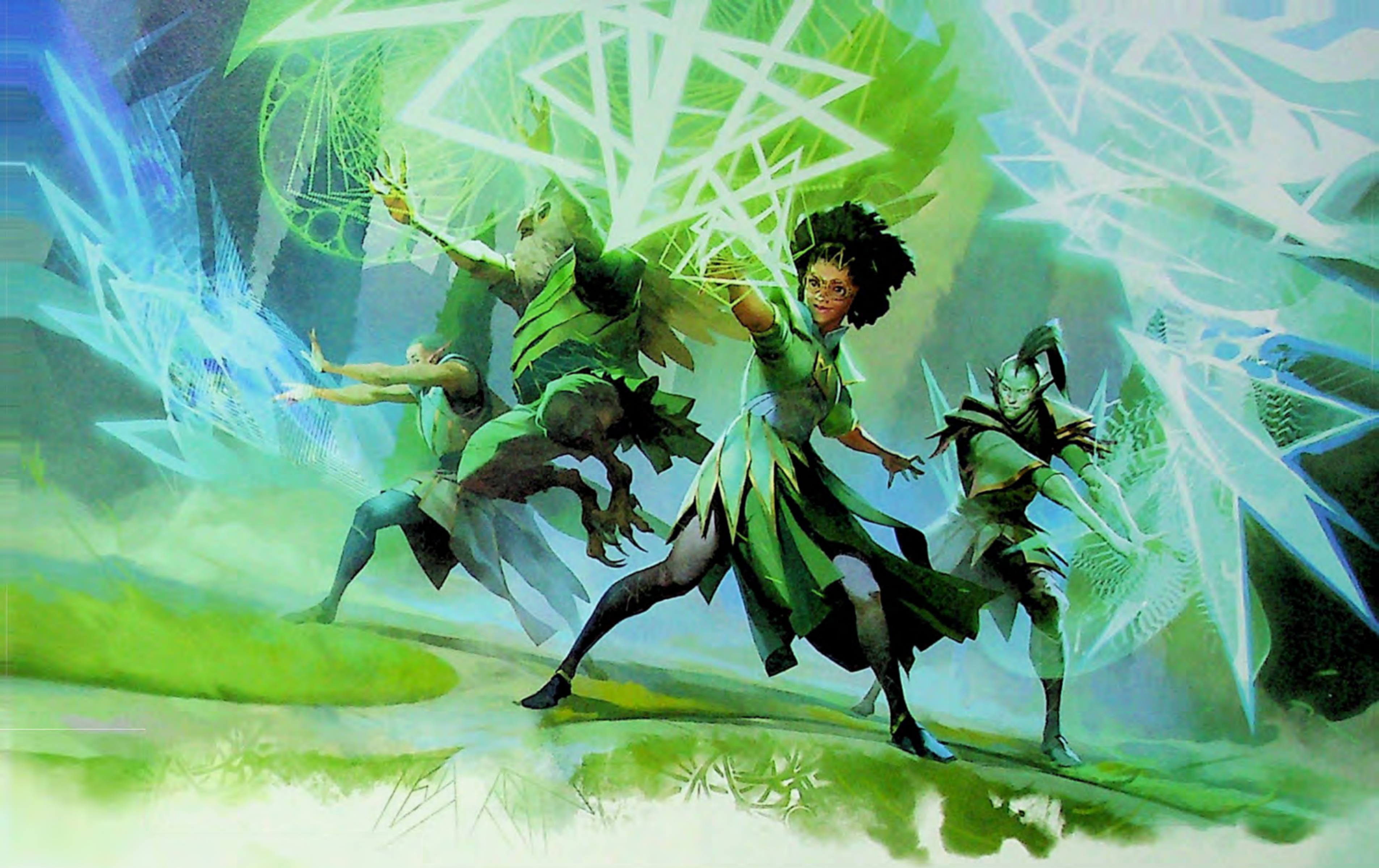
Tidal Strike. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) cold damage.

Spellcasting. The professor casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *minor illusion*
2/day each: *control water, create or destroy water, mage armor, stone shape*
1/day: *wall of ice*

BONUS ACTIONS

Rushing Wave. The professor is momentarily surrounded by a swirling wave of water and moves up to 30 feet. When the professor moves within 5 feet of any other creature during this bonus action, that creature must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw, or the creature is knocked prone and it can't take reactions until the start of its next turn. A creature can suffer this effect only once during a turn.



QUANDRIX SCHOLARS

The scholars of Quandrix College focus on the mathematical principles that govern reality. Through these formulas, they can manipulate properties of matter and space, as well as abstract and conceptual space such as the mind, probability, and the flow of magic itself.

QUANDRIX STUDENTS

The students of Quandrix College—first as apprentices and then as pledgemages—immerse themselves in the magic of geometry and metaphysics. Their ultimate goal isn't mastery, however. Rather, in their projects they explore and expand knowledge without expecting concrete answers. Whether students are extrapolating mathematical patterns in nature or engaging in speculative dives into topological formulas that bend reality, their studies blur the line between abstract numerical theory and natural reality.

QUANDRIX PROFESSOR OF SUBSTANCE

Professors of substance specialize in the concrete side of Quandrix philosophy, manipulating physical dimensions and properties of growth. Their magic alters and replaces the equations that describe the natural world, including creatures, space, and substance. Through these manipulations, the professors change their size and the physical form of others, manipulate nature into rapid growth, travel instantaneously, and even fold space into deadly edges.

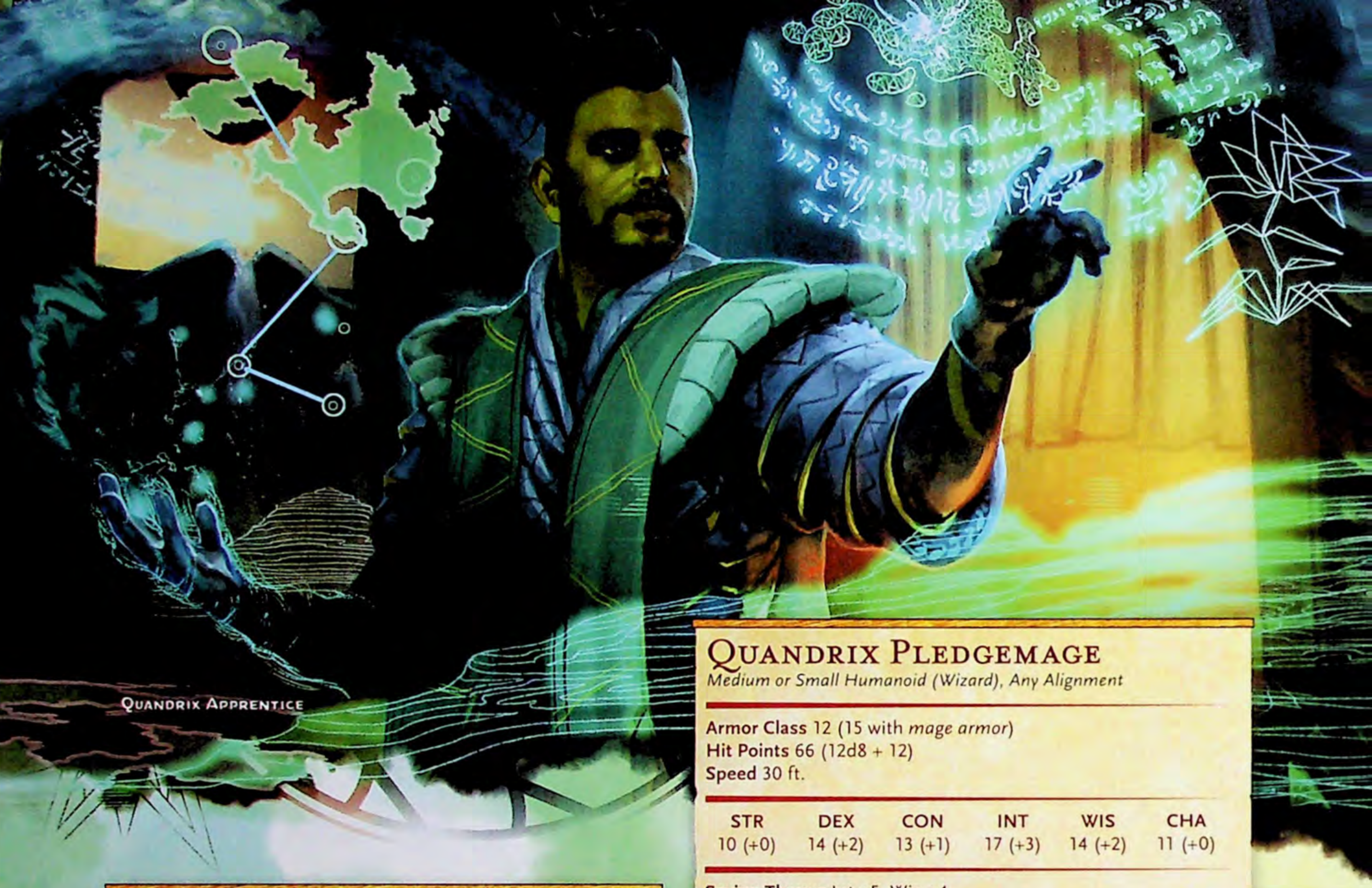
These professors teach that numbers and mathematics aren't merely intellectual concepts, but that they exist physically in all things. Professors of substance teach their students to wield magic practically, creating tangible change in the world around them.

QUANDRIX PROFESSOR OF THEORY

Professors of theory advance the Quandrix philosophy that math-magical manipulation is most powerful in the abstract dimension of minds, probability, and the fabric of magic itself. Their equations shift perceptions in profound ways, alter probability, and interfere with the formation of other magic. In battle, the professors tweak probability to impede attacks and strike at the minds of their foes with lancing equations that disrupt the opponent's resolve.

Professors of theory hold that altering the way a person interacts with the world can change the world. They impress upon their students to use magic as a tool to shape the overall experience of reality, and in turn make the world a better place.

VIKTOR TITOV



Quandrix Apprentice

Quandrix Apprentice

Medium or Small Humanoid (Wizard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 11 (14 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +4, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +6, Investigation +6, Nature +4
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common plus any two languages
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Actions

Multiattack. The apprentice makes two Exponential Lash attacks.

Exponential Lash. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) force damage, and the apprentice can cause one creature it can see within 30 feet of the target to take 9 (2d6 + 2) force damage.

Spellcasting. The apprentice casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 12):

At will: *guidance, mage hand*
1/day each: *enlarge/reduce, mage armor*

Quandrix Pledgemage

Medium or Small Humanoid (Wizard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +4
Skills Arcana +7, Investigation +7, Nature +5
Senses passive Perception 12
Languages Common plus any two languages
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Actions

Multiattack. The pledgemage makes two Exponential Lash attacks.

Exponential Lash. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 +3) force damage, and the pledgemage can cause one creature it can see within 30 feet of the target to take 10 (2d6 + 3) force damage.

Spellcasting. The pledgemage casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13):

At will: *guidance, mage hand*
1/day each: *dimension door, enlarge/reduce, mage armor, plant growth*

Bonus Actions

Vortex Calculus (Recharge 4–6). The pledgemage teleports, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, to an unoccupied space it can see within 60 feet of itself. Immediately after it teleports, each creature within 20 feet of the space it left must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 7 (2d6) force damage and is moved 10 feet in a random horizontal direction. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't moved.

RYAN ALEXANDER LEE

QUANDRIX PROF. OF SUBSTANCE

Medium or Small Humanoid (Wizard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 104 (16d8 + 32)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +5, Int +7, Wis +5, Cha +4
Skills Arcana +10, Investigation +10, Nature +7, Perception +5
Damage Resistances force
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Common plus any four languages
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The professor makes two Spatial Blade attacks.

Spatial Blade. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit (the target can't benefit from cover less than total cover), reach 5 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) force damage, or 22 (4d8 + 4) force damage if the professor is Large or larger, and the professor can push the target horizontally up to 10 feet away.

Spellcasting. The professor casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *guidance, mage hand, mending* (as an action)
1/day each: *creation* (as an action), *dimension door, mage armor, plant growth, polymorph*

BONUS ACTIONS

Dilation (Recharge 5–6). The professor magically alters its physical form until it uses this bonus action again, until it is incapacitated or dies, or until it dismisses the effect (no action required). Choose one of the following options:

Expand. The professor becomes Large if there is sufficient room for it to grow. It has advantage on attack rolls and on ability checks and saving throws that rely on Strength.

Contract. The professor becomes Small. Its walking speed increases to 60 feet, attack rolls against it have disadvantage, and it has advantage on ability checks and saving throws that rely on Dexterity.

REACTIONS

Avoidant Translation (2/Day). When the professor is hit by an attack roll, it can increase its AC by 3 against that attack, potentially causing it to miss. The professor can then teleport, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying, up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space it can see.

QUANDRIX PROF. OF THEORY

Medium or Small Humanoid (Wizard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 97 (15d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	19 (+4)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +5, Int +7, Wis +5, Cha +4
Skills Arcana +10, Insight +5, Investigation +10, Perception +5
Damage Resistances psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, frightened
Senses passive Perception 15
Languages Common plus any four languages
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The professor makes two Heuristic Lance attacks. It can also use Overriding Theorem, if available.

Heuristic Lance. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) psychic damage, and the target is poisoned until the end of its next turn.

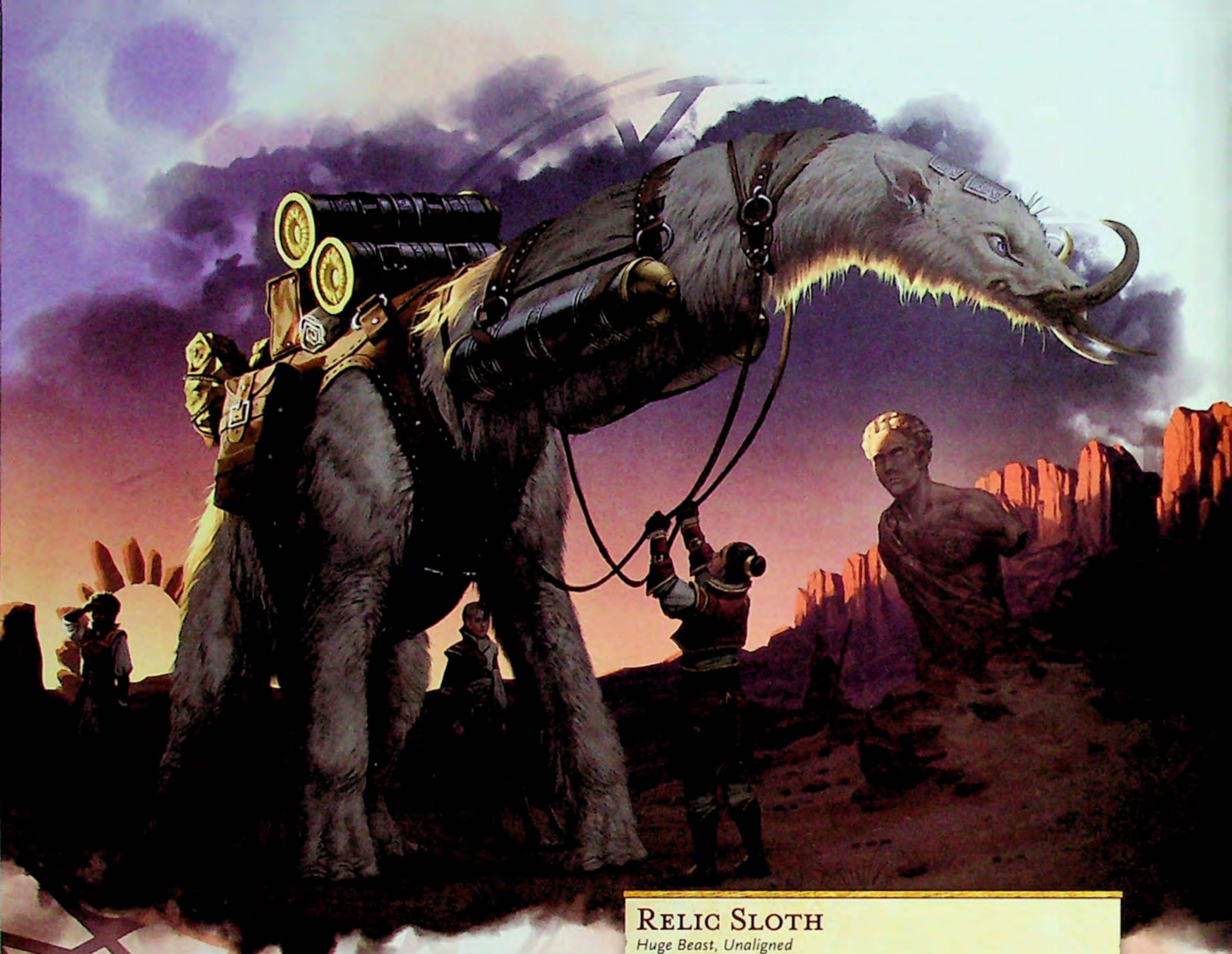
Overriding Theorem (Recharge 4–6). The professor magically influences the mind of up to two creatures it can see within 60 feet of itself. Each target must succeed on a DC 15 Intelligence saving throw or become charmed by the professor until the start of the professor's next turn. The charmed creature must immediately use its reaction, if available, to move up its speed toward another creature of the professor's choice and make one melee attack against that other creature.

Spellcasting. The professor casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *guidance, mage hand, minor illusion*
1/day each: *mage armor, major image, mirage arcane* (as an action), *Rary's telepathic bond*

REACTIONS

Divide by Zero (2/Day). When the professor sees another creature within 60 feet of itself casting a spell, the professor can try to nullify the spell's formation. The creature must succeed on a DC 15 saving throw using the spell's spellcasting ability, or the spell fails and is wasted.



RELIC SLOTH

For long expeditions, Lorehold mages often employ relic sloths to haul adventuring equipment and excavated artifacts—so long as their study isn't in any particular hurry. Relic sloths travel at an excruciatingly slow pace, deliberating every step and moving only when necessary. But this caution makes these hulking creatures perfect for traversing treacherous and crumbling ruins, where other beasts of burden would falter. The distinctive sickle-shaped claws on a relic sloth's forelimbs are primarily used for climbing, though they can fend off a hungry predator in a pinch.

RELIC SLOTH

Huge Beast, Unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 76 (8d12 + 24)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	9 (−1)	17 (+3)	2 (−4)	12 (+1)	8 (−1)

Skills Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages —
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

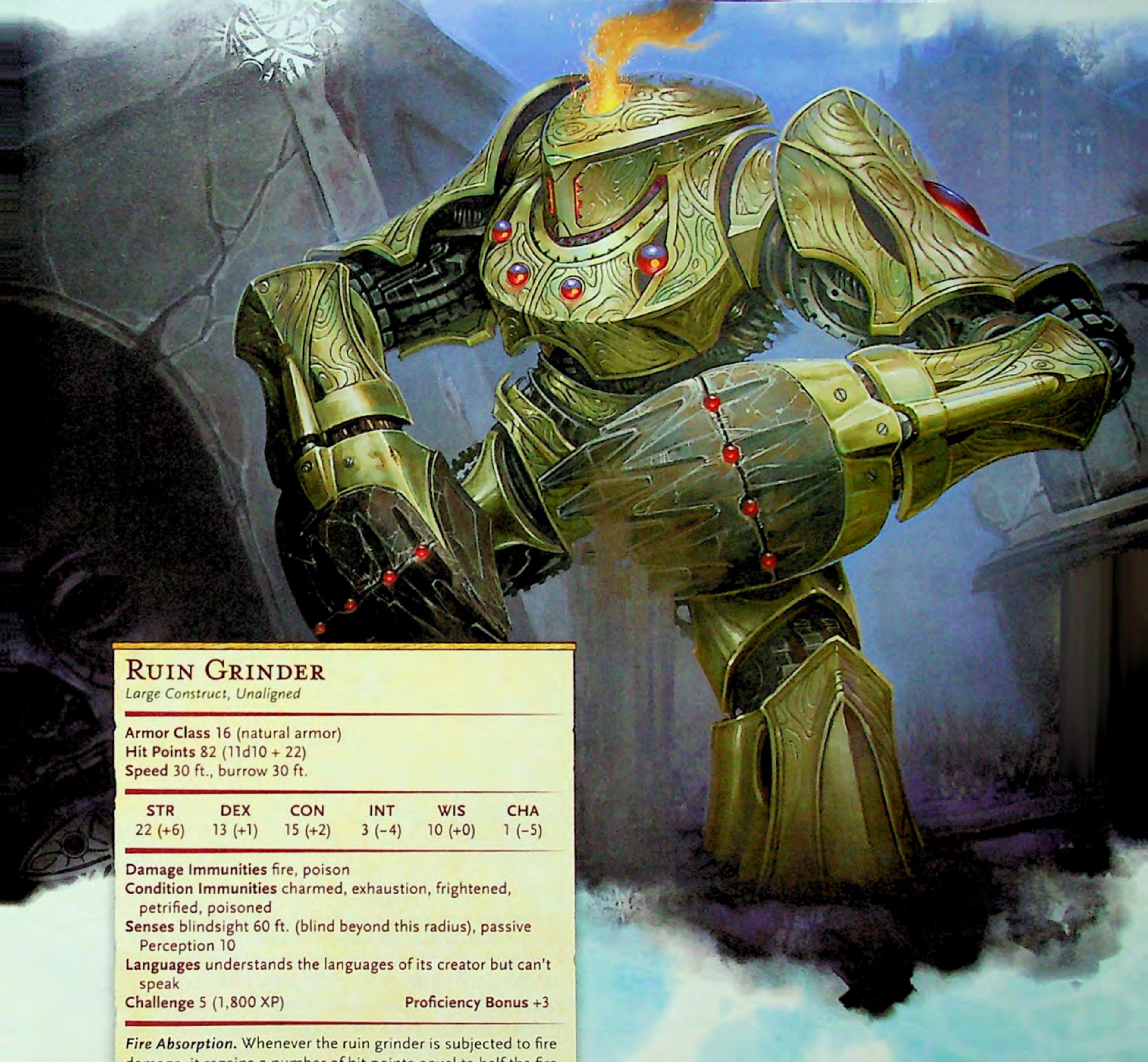
ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) slashing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 15). The relic sloth can grapple no more than two targets at a time.

REACTIONS

Slow but Sturdy. When the relic sloth is subjected to an effect that would move it out of its current space or knock it prone, it is neither moved nor knocked prone.

ILSE GORT



HECTOR ORTIZ

RUIN GRINDER

Large Construct, Unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 82 (11d10 + 22)
Speed 30 ft., burrow 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	3 (−4)	10 (+0)	1 (−5)

Damage Immunities fire, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, petrified, poisoned
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10
Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Fire Absorption. Whenever the ruin grinder is subjected to fire damage, it regains a number of hit points equal to half the fire damage dealt.

Siege Monster. The ruin grinder deals double damage to objects and structures.

Tunneler. The ruin grinder can burrow through solid rock at half its burrowing speed and leaves a 10-foot-diameter tunnel in its wake.

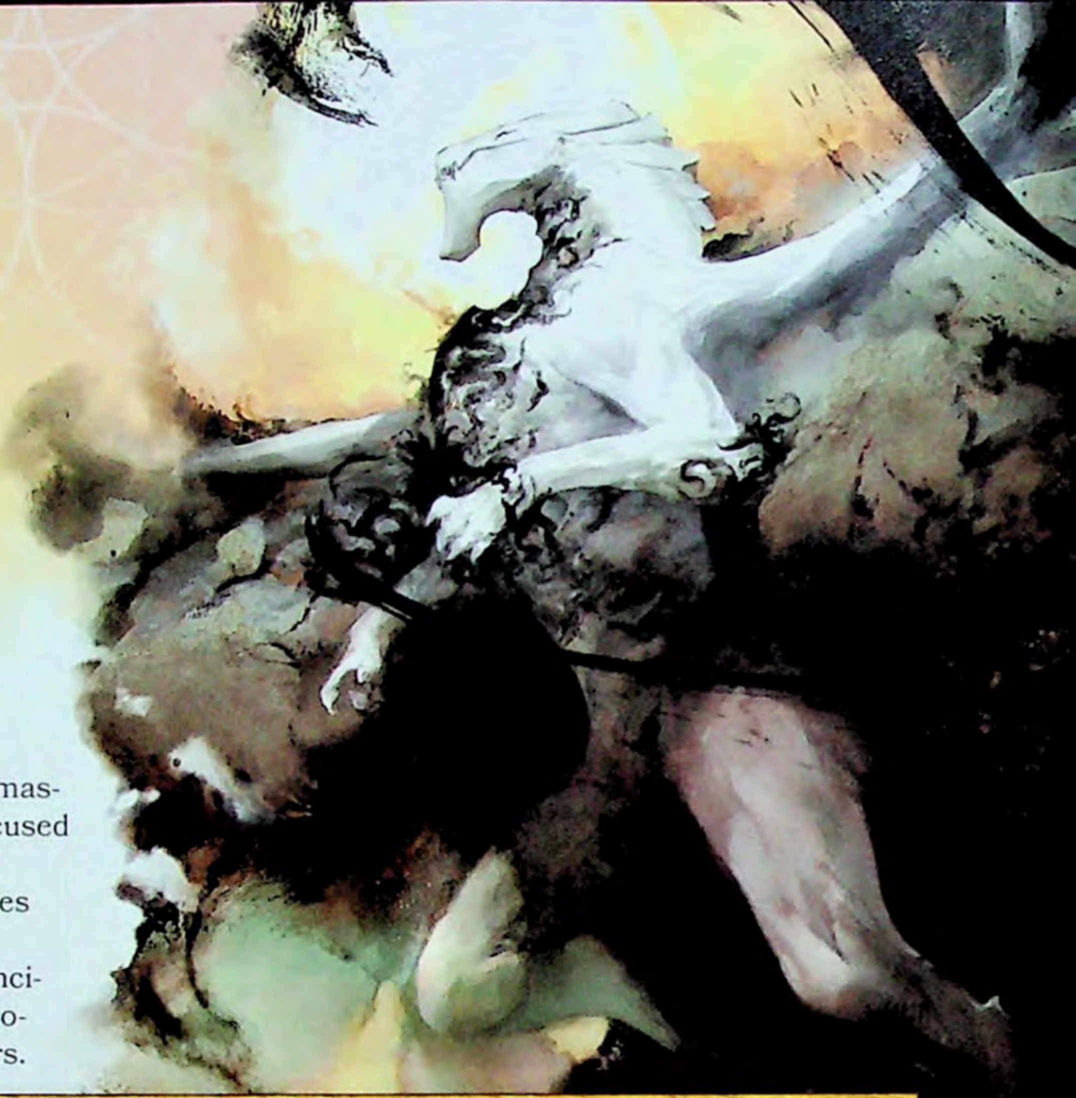
ACTIONS

Multiattack. The ruin grinder makes two Excavator attacks.

Excavator. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d6 + 6) force damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 17 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 feet away and knocked prone.

RUIN GRINDER

Created by the archaeomancers of Lorehold College, ruin grinders are mighty automatons built to excavate ancient ruins and artifacts. The massive toothed shovels attached to a ruin grinder's arms tear through millennia-old bedrock with ease, leading some Lorehold mages to fear that the grinders destroy more history than they unearth.



KEKAI KOTAKI

SHADRIX SILVERQUILL

Centuries ago, the dragon Shadrix Silverquill mastered the magic of light and shadow, and he focused that magic through communication. Shadrix's words thrummed with power, inspiring his allies and demoralizing his enemies.

He established Silverquill College on the principles of eloquence and leadership, seeking to produce leaders who would go forth to guide others.

SHADRIX SILVERQUILL

Gargantuan Dragon (Bard), Neutral

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)
Hit Points 363 (22d20 + 132)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
25 (+7)	14 (+2)	23 (+6)	18 (+4)	18 (+4)	26 (+8)

Saving Throws Dex +9, Con +13, Wis +11, Cha +15
Skills Arcana +18, Deception +15, Perception +11, Persuasion +15
Damage Immunities psychic, radiant
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 21
Languages all
Challenge 22 (41,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +7

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Shadrix fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Shadrix makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (1d10 + 7) piercing damage plus 4 (1d8) radiant damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +14 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d6 + 7) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it is wracked with despair and has disadvantage on attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

Illuminating Shadow Breath (Recharge 5–6). Shadrix exhales an entwined burst of blinding radiance and unnerving shadow in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 21 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 31 (7d8) radiant damage and 31 (7d8) psychic damage and is blinded until the start of Shadrix's next turn. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't blinded.

Spellcasting. Shadrix casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 23):

1/day each: *darkness, daylight, hypnotic pattern, sending, suggestion*

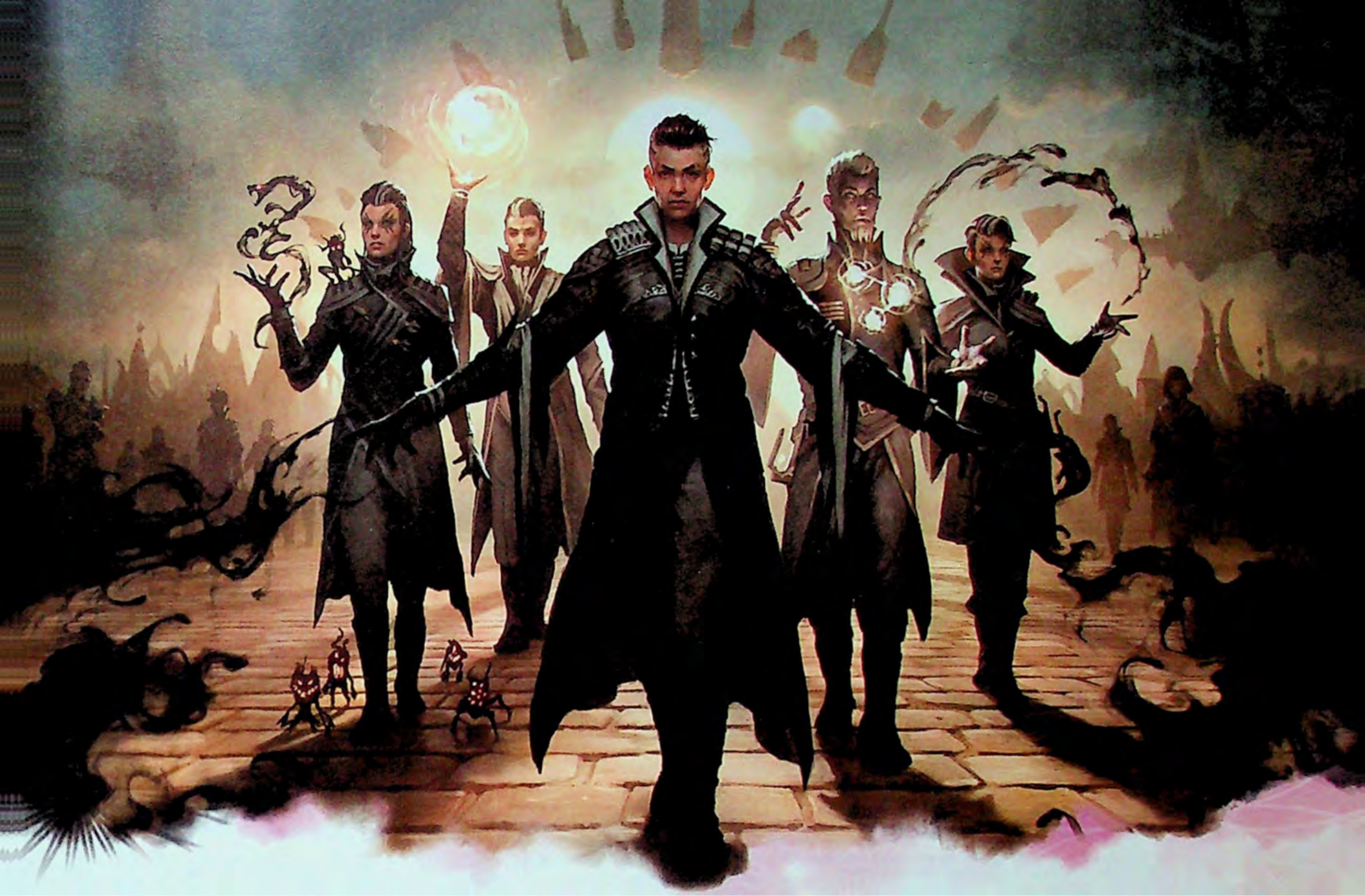
LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Shadrix can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Shadrix regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Claw. Shadrix makes one Claw attack.

Shadow Slip (Costs 2 Actions). Shadrix becomes an inky cloud of shadow and can move up to half his flying speed without provoking opportunity attacks, then resumes his true form. During this movement, he can move through creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. If he moves through a creature, it must succeed on a DC 21 Constitution saving throw or become blinded until the end of its next turn. If Shadrix ends this move inside an object, he takes 5 (1d10) force damage and is shunted to the nearest unoccupied space.

Flash of Inspiration (Costs 3 Actions). Shadrix magically summons 1d4 **inkling mascots** (in this chapter) in unoccupied spaces he can see within 60 feet of himself. The inklings obey his commands and take their turns immediately after his. While any of these inklings live, Shadrix has advantage on attack rolls and saving throws. These inklings disappear after 10 minutes, when Shadrix dies, or when he uses this action again.



BRYAN SOLA

SILVERQUILL SCHOLARS

The scholars of Silverquill College study the power of magic shaped through spoken and written words. They use that power either to illuminate and guide or to obscure and demoralize.

SILVERQUILL STUDENTS

Stylish and driven, the students of Silverquill College—first as apprentices and then as pledgemages—cut imposing figures on campus. Dressed in smartly trimmed black-and-white uniforms, these budding mages practice bolstering speeches and wield inky blades.

Some Silverquill students prefer the benevolent side of language, using their words to uplift their friends and illuminate harsh truths about those in power. Others, though, choose to wield words more ruthlessly and master the art of insults and discouragement (and in some cases, petty trash talk). Regardless, nearly all members of Silverquill College carry themselves with a fearsome, never-second-place attitude—because in the art of wielding words, confidence is key.

SILVERQUILL PROFESSOR OF RADIANCE

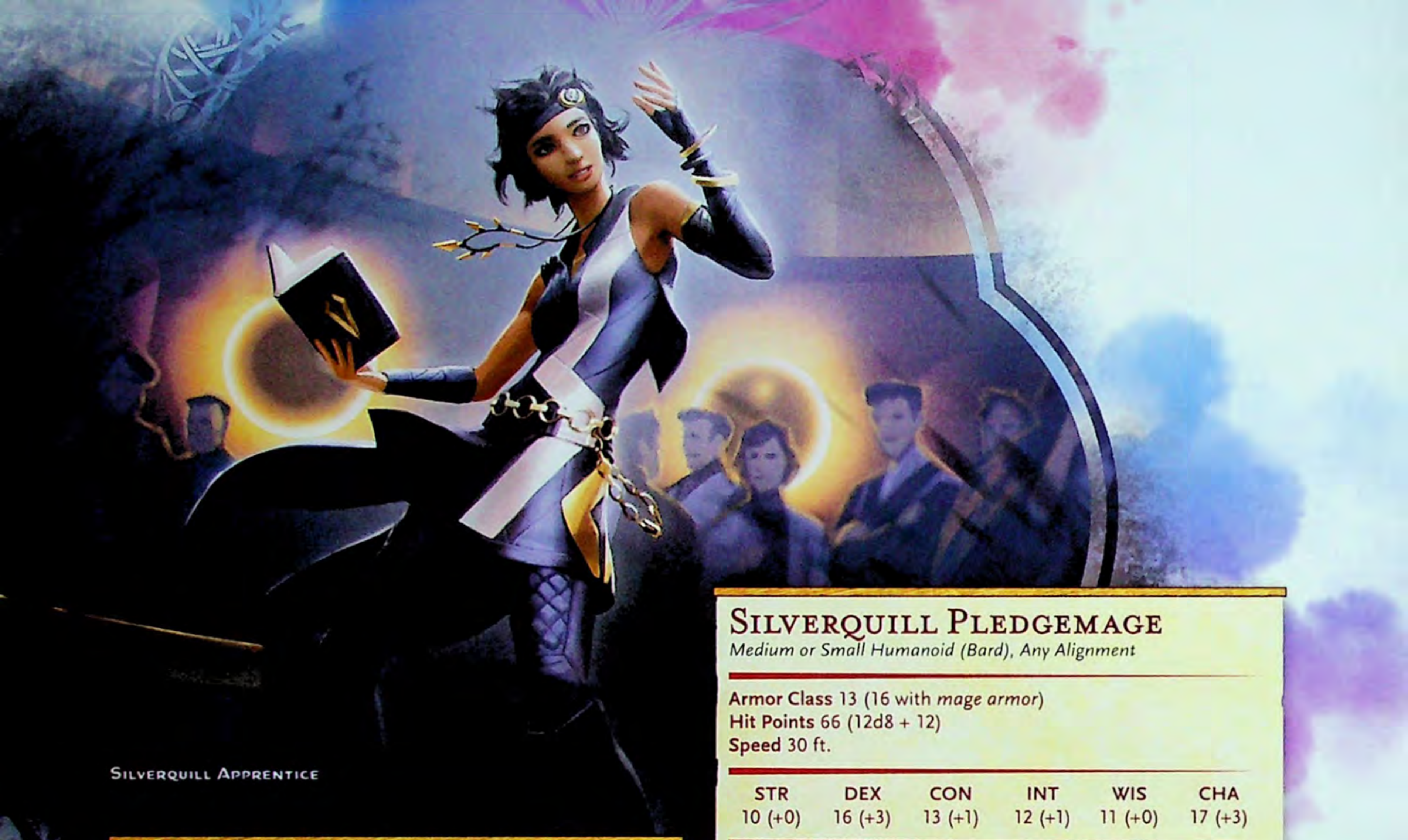
Professors of radiance call up magic through spoken words and glyphs formed of magically shaped ink and light. The professors channel radiance to illuminate their allies, bolstering them with encouragement and inspiring any who witness their orations. Professors of radiance can turn their words into potent assets in battle or strike at their foes with searing radiance.

These Silverquill teachers seek to inspire greatness in all that they do, pushing their students to look for the good in all things and bring that into the light.

SILVERQUILL PROFESSOR OF SHADOW

Professors of shadow wield the linguistic magic of Silverquill College through slicing wit and debilitating inky shadow. Whether weaving their magic through spoken incantations and scathing insults or through shadows, these teachers break down the resolve of their foes.

The professors strive to carry themselves as immaculately as possible, seeking to overawe and wrong-foot anyone who would stand against them in debate or in battle. In teaching their students, professors of shadow focus on words that find the tiniest, most invisible cracks in an opponent's defenses and break them.



Silverquill Apprentice

SILVERQUILL APPRENTICE

Medium or Small Humanoid (Bard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Cha +4
Skills Deception +4, Performance +6, Persuasion +6
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common plus any two languages
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

ACTIONS

Ink Blade. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) psychic damage.

Spellcasting. The apprentice casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 12):

At will: *dancing lights, friends*
1/day each: *command, mage armor*

REACTIONS

Rousing Verse. When a creature the apprentice can see within 30 feet of it fails a saving throw, the apprentice magically weaves together stirring prose, allowing the creature to reroll the saving throw and use the higher result.

SILVERQUILL PLEDGEMAGE

Medium or Small Humanoid (Bard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 13 (16 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Wis +2, Cha +5
Skills Deception +5, Performance +7, Persuasion +7
Senses passive Perception 10
Languages Common plus any two languages
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

ACTIONS

Ink Blade. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) psychic damage.

Spellcasting. The pledgemage casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 13):

At will: *dancing lights, friends*
1/day each: *command, confusion, mage armor, tongues*

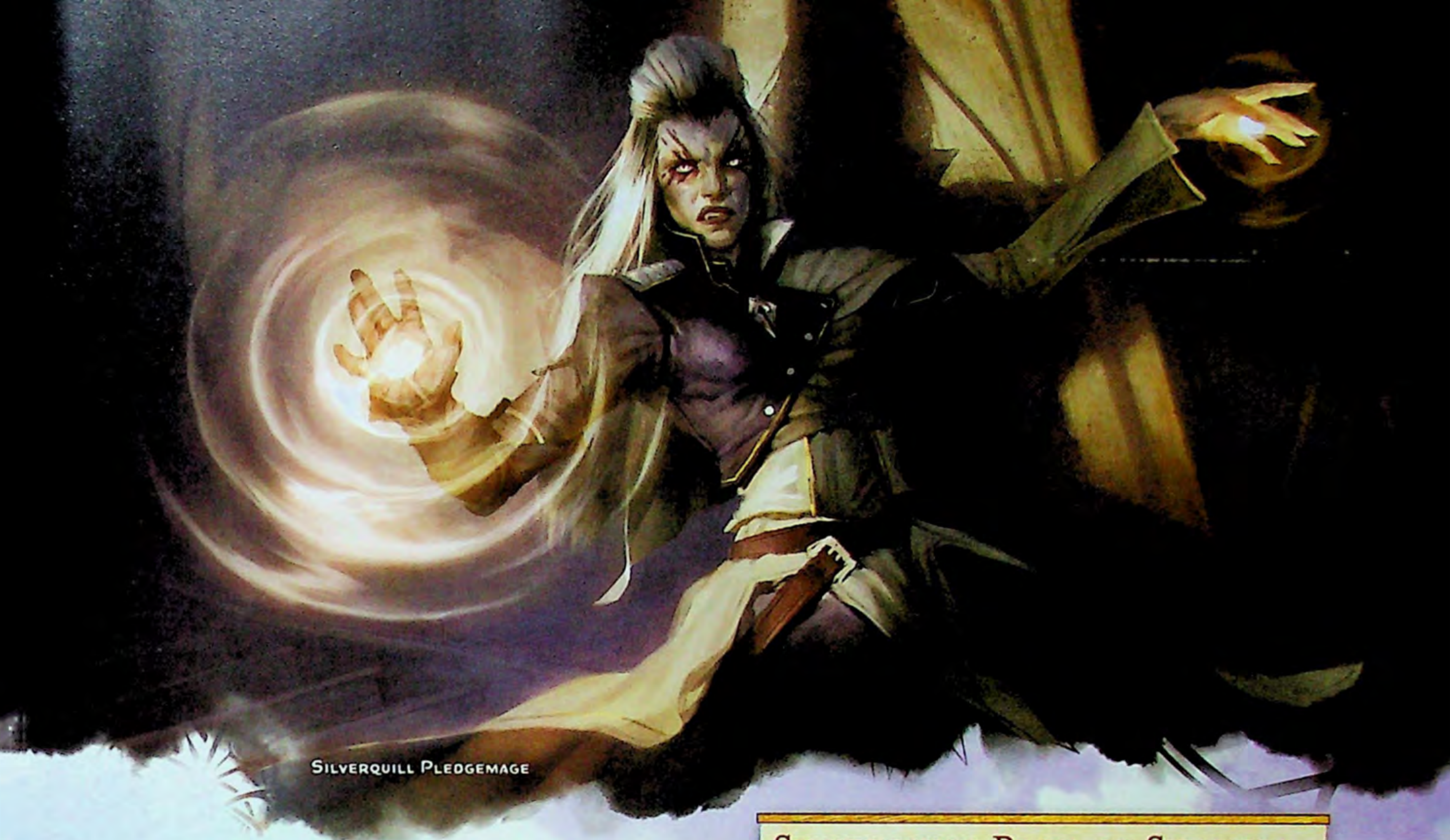
BONUS ACTIONS

Demotivate (2/Day). The pledgemage hurls magical insults at one creature it can see within 30 feet of itself. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened of the pledgemage for 1 minute. While frightened in this way, the target can't take reactions, its speed is halved, and any hit the pledgemage scores against the creature is a critical hit. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

REACTIONS

Rousing Verse. When a creature the pledgemage can see within 30 feet of it fails a saving throw, the pledgemage magically weaves together stirring prose, allowing the creature to reroll the saving throw and use the higher result.

MIKE BIEREK


SILVERQUILL PLEDGEMAGE

DENMAN ROOKE

SILVERQUILL PROF. OF RADIANCE

Medium or Small Humanoid (Bard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 97 (15d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Int +6, Wis +4, Cha +7
Skills Arcana +6, Deception +7, Performance +10, Persuasion +10
Damage Resistances radiant
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages Common plus any four languages
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The professor makes two Radiant Strike attacks. The professor can replace one of the attacks with a use of Spellcasting.

Radiant Strike. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 + 4) radiant damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw be blinded until the end of its next turn.

Spellcasting. The professor casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *dancing lights, friends*
2/day each: *bless, command, cure wounds, daylight, mage armor*
1/day each: *hypnotic pattern, tongues*

SILVERQUILL PROF. OF SHADOW

Medium or Small Humanoid (Bard), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)
Hit Points 97 (15d8 + 30)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +5, Int +6, Wis +4, Cha +7
Skills Arcana +6, Deception +10, Persuasion +7, Stealth +5
Damage Resistances necrotic
Senses darkvision 300 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common plus any four languages
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Devil's Sight. Magical darkness doesn't impede the professor's darkvision.

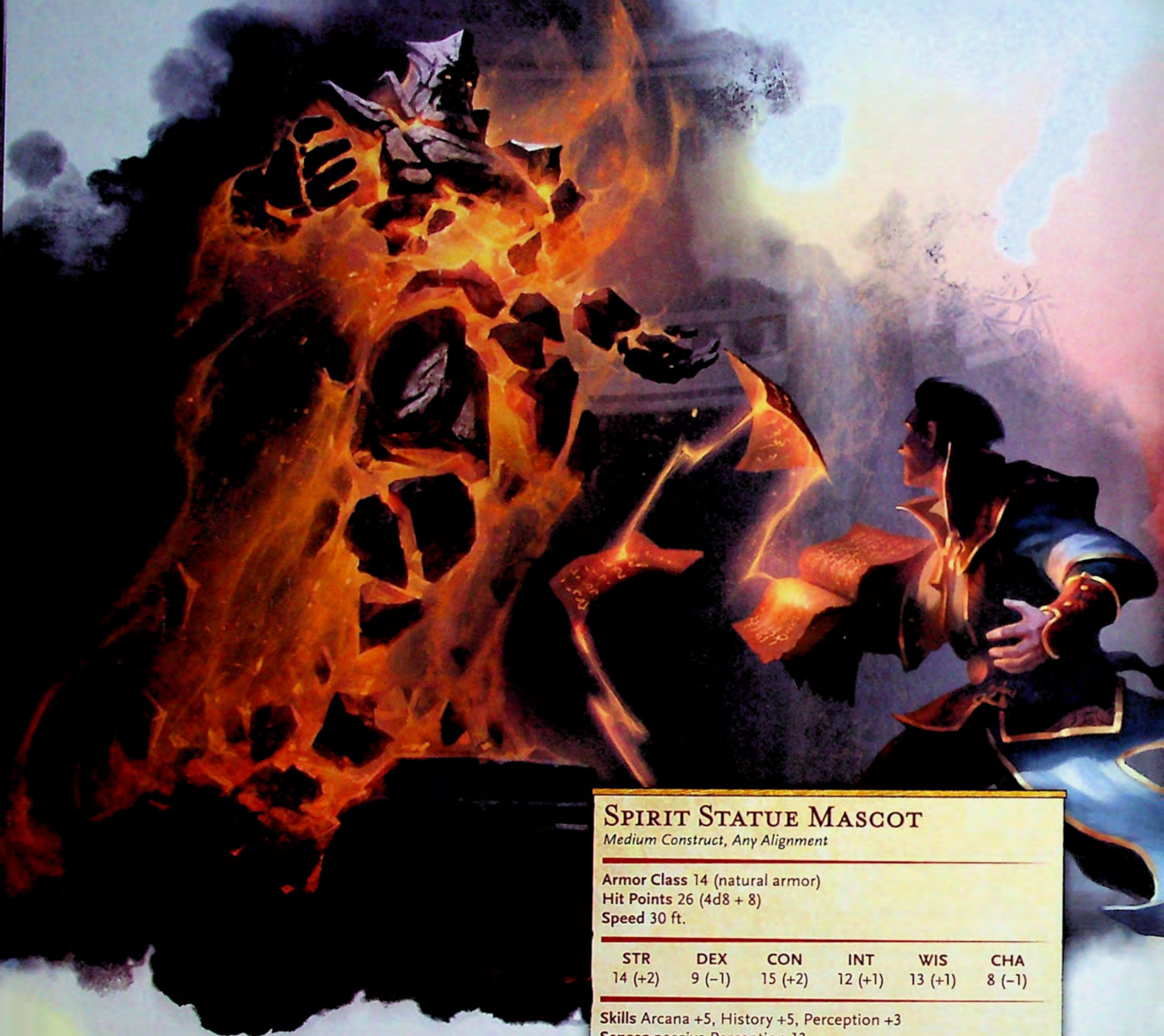
ACTIONS

Multiattack. The professor makes two Ink Lance attacks. The professor can replace one of the attacks with a use of Spellcasting.

Ink Lance. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 + 4) necrotic damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw be blinded until the end of its next turn.

Spellcasting. The professor casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Charisma as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *dancing lights, friends*
2/day each: *bane, command, darkness, mage armor*
1/day: *tongues*



ANDREY KUZINSKIY

SPIRIT STATUE MASCOT

To enhance their studies of the past, Lorehold students often call upon the spirits of dead creatures. Mages seeking longer-term assistance from ancient spirits have learned to house these spirits in statues, giving them a more permanent residence from which to assist the living.

Some of these spirit statues bond with and mentor a specific mage, but most serve in a variety of roles for numerous individuals, ranging from research colleagues to martial tacticians. Regardless, their appearance is so common around the Lorehold campus that they have become the college's mascots.

SPIRIT STATUE MASCOT

Medium Construct, Any Alignment

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	9 (−1)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	8 (−1)

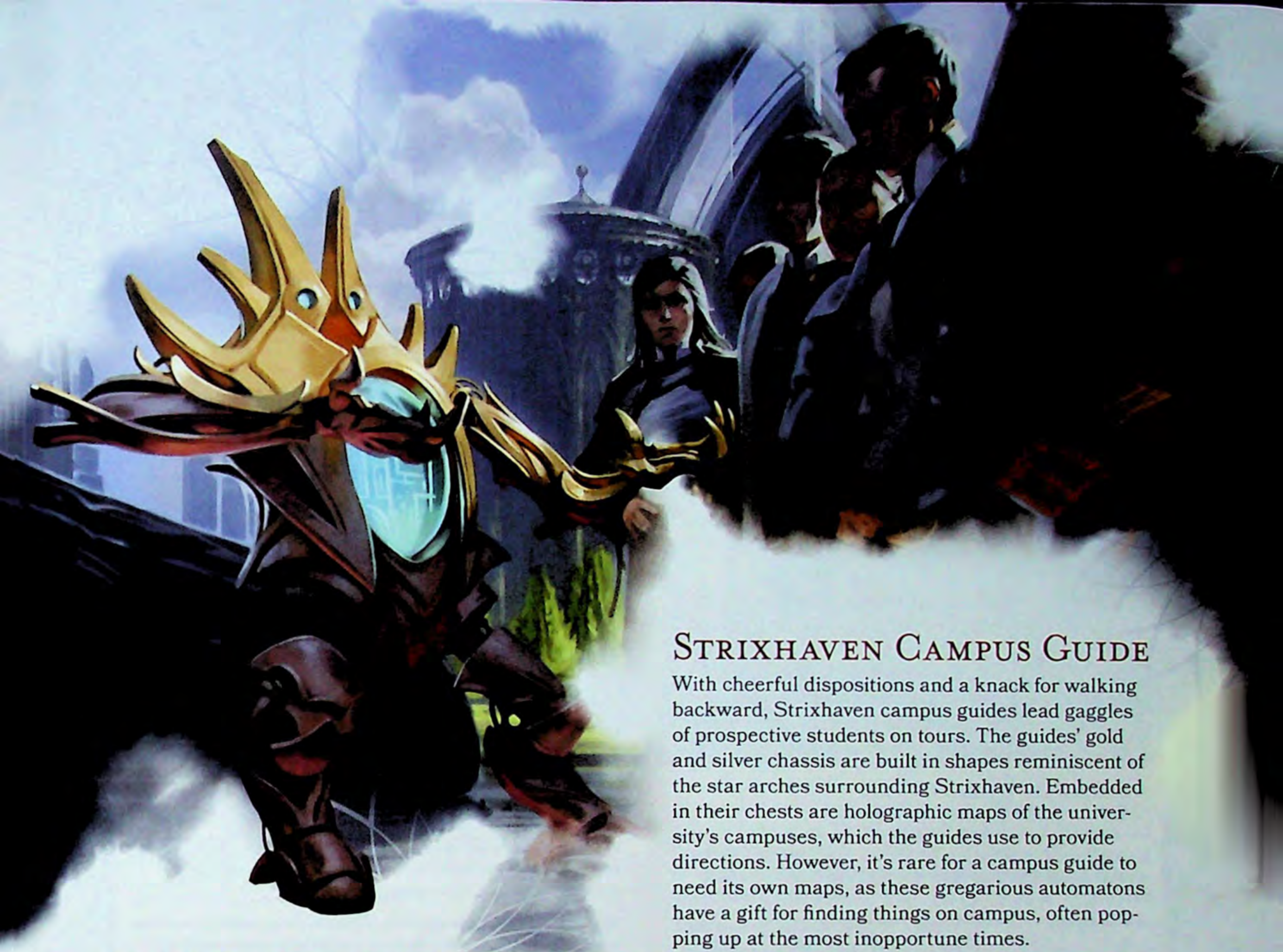
Skills Arcana +5, History +5, Perception +3
Senses passive Perception 13
Languages any languages it knew in life
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Death Burst. When the spirit statue is reduced to 0 hit points, the statue crumbles, and the spirit returns to the afterlife in a burst of ghostly white flame. Each creature within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 3 (1d6) radiant damage.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Counsel of the Past (2/Day). The spirit statue touches one creature. Once within the next 10 minutes, that creature can roll a d4 and add the number rolled to one ability check of its choice, immediately after rolling the d20.



SLAWOMIR MANIAK

STRIXHAVEN CAMPUS GUIDE

With cheerful dispositions and a knack for walking backward, Strixhaven campus guides lead gaggles of prospective students on tours. The guides' gold and silver chassis are built in shapes reminiscent of the star arches surrounding Strixhaven. Embedded in their chests are holographic maps of the university's campuses, which the guides use to provide directions. However, it's rare for a campus guide to need its own maps, as these gregarious automatons have a gift for finding things on campus, often popping up at the most inopportune times.

STRIXHAVEN CAMPUS GUIDE

Small Construct, Typically Lawful Good

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 31 (7d6 + 7)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Dex +4
Skills Insight +3, Persuasion +3
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses blindsight 60 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common plus any three languages
Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Campus Knowledge. While at Strixhaven, the guide can't become lost by magical or nonmagical means. The guide also has advantage on ability checks made to locate creatures or objects at Strixhaven.

Univocal Speech. When the guide speaks, any creature that knows at least one language and can hear the guide understands what it says.

Unusual Nature. The guide doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The guide makes two Slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

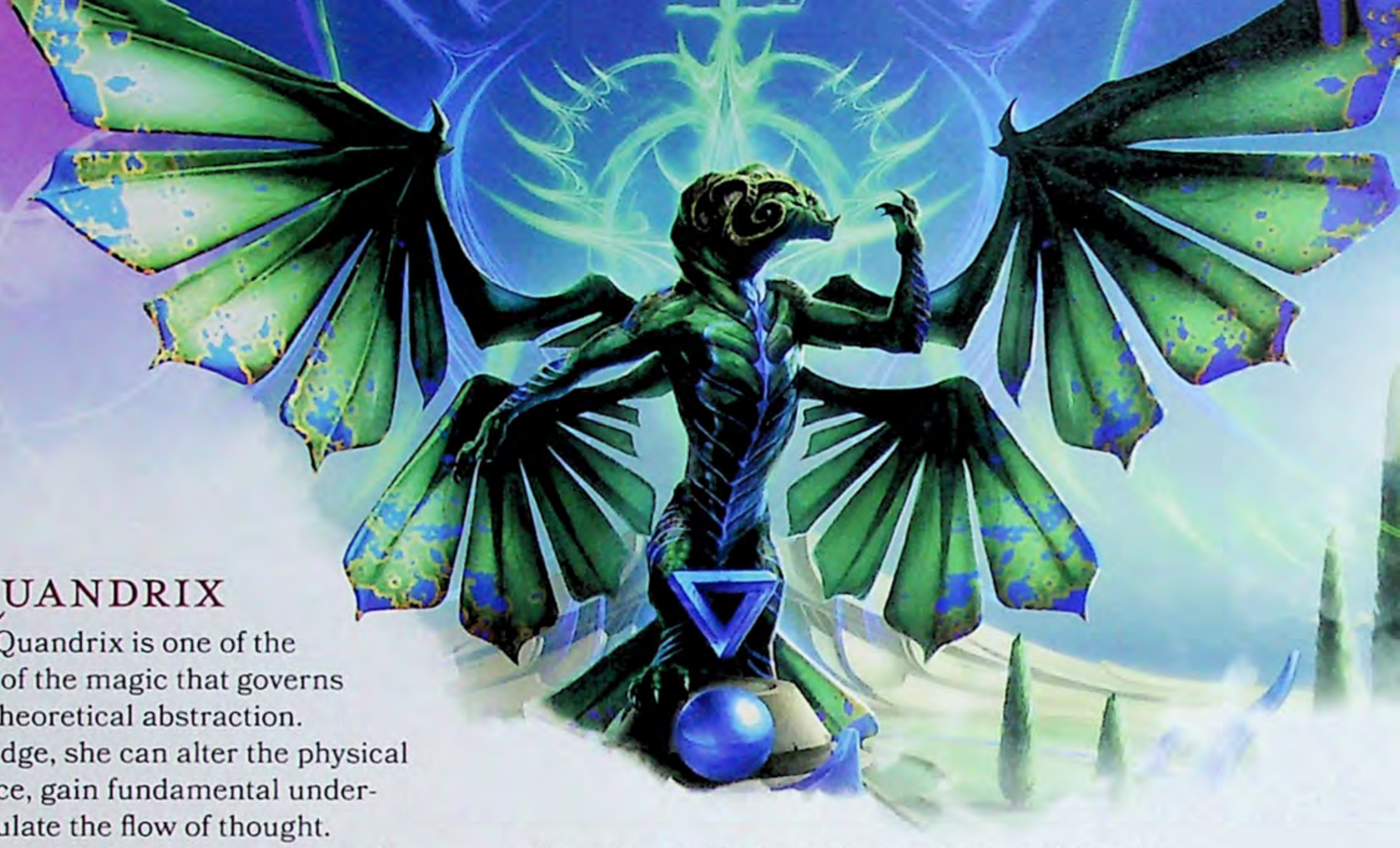
Smile and Wave. Each creature of the guide's choice that is within 30 feet of the guide must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed by the guide for 1 hour.

A charmed target must move on its turn toward the guide, trying to get within 5 feet of the guide. The target doesn't move into obviously dangerous ground, such as a fire or a pit. Whenever the charmed target takes damage, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success.

A target that successfully saves is immune to any guide's Smile and Wave ability for the next 24 hours.

BONUS ACTIONS

Need Directions? The guide takes the Help action.



TANAZIR QUANDRIX

The dragon Tanazir Quandrix is one of the most potent masters of the magic that governs physical reality and theoretical abstraction. Through this knowledge, she can alter the physical properties of existence, gain fundamental understanding, and manipulate the flow of thought.

Tanazir founded Quandrix College to nurture the spark of curiosity in those who would pursue knowledge. The goal is to train mages who seek knowledge for its own sake, guided by the mathematical principles that describe and govern the nature of reality.

Tanazir's spells, legendary actions, and breath weapon manifest luminous patterns of geometric light. These take various forms, such as an interlocking cage around the target of a spell or a wave of infinitely replicating fractal swirls in the area of her breath.

TANAZIR QUANDRIX

Gargantuan Dragon (Wizard), Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)
Hit Points 444 (24d20 + 192)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
28 (+9)	14 (+2)	27 (+8)	28 (+9)	18 (+4)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Dex +9, Con +15, Wis +11, Cha +10
Skills Arcana +23, Investigation +23, Nature +16, Perception +18
Damage Immunities force, psychic
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 28
Languages Common, Draconic, telepathy 120 ft.
Challenge 24 (62,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +7

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Tanazir fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Tanazir makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (1d10 + 9) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) force damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (2d6 + 9) slashing damage. If the target is a creature, it is addled by recursive thoughts, reducing its speed to 0 until the start of Tanazir's next turn.

Diminution Breath (Recharge 5–6). Tanazir exhales a weakening equation in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 23 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 45 (13d6) force damage and 45 (13d6) psychic damage and is weakened until the start of Tanazir's next turn. While weakened, it has disadvantage on the following rolls that rely on Strength: attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and isn't weakened.

Spellcasting. Tanazir casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 24):

1/day each: *divination*, *enlarge/reduce*, *mirage arcane* (as an action), *polymorph*, *scrying* (as an action), *seeming*

Teleport. Tanazir teleports to an unoccupied space she can see within 100 feet of herself.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Tanazir can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Tanazir regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Claw. Tanazir makes one Claw attack.

Fold Space (Costs 2 Actions). Tanazir uses Teleport, and each other creature within 20 feet of the space she left must succeed on a DC 24 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 30 feet closer to the center of that space and take 16 (3d10) force damage.

Fractal Refraction (Costs 3 Actions). Tanazir magically summons 1d4 **fractal mascots** (in this chapter) in unoccupied spaces she can see within 120 feet of herself. The fractals obey her commands and take their turns immediately after hers. While any of these fractals remain, attack rolls made against Tanazir have disadvantage. A summoned fractal disappears after 1 minute, when it or Tanazir dies, or when she uses this action again.

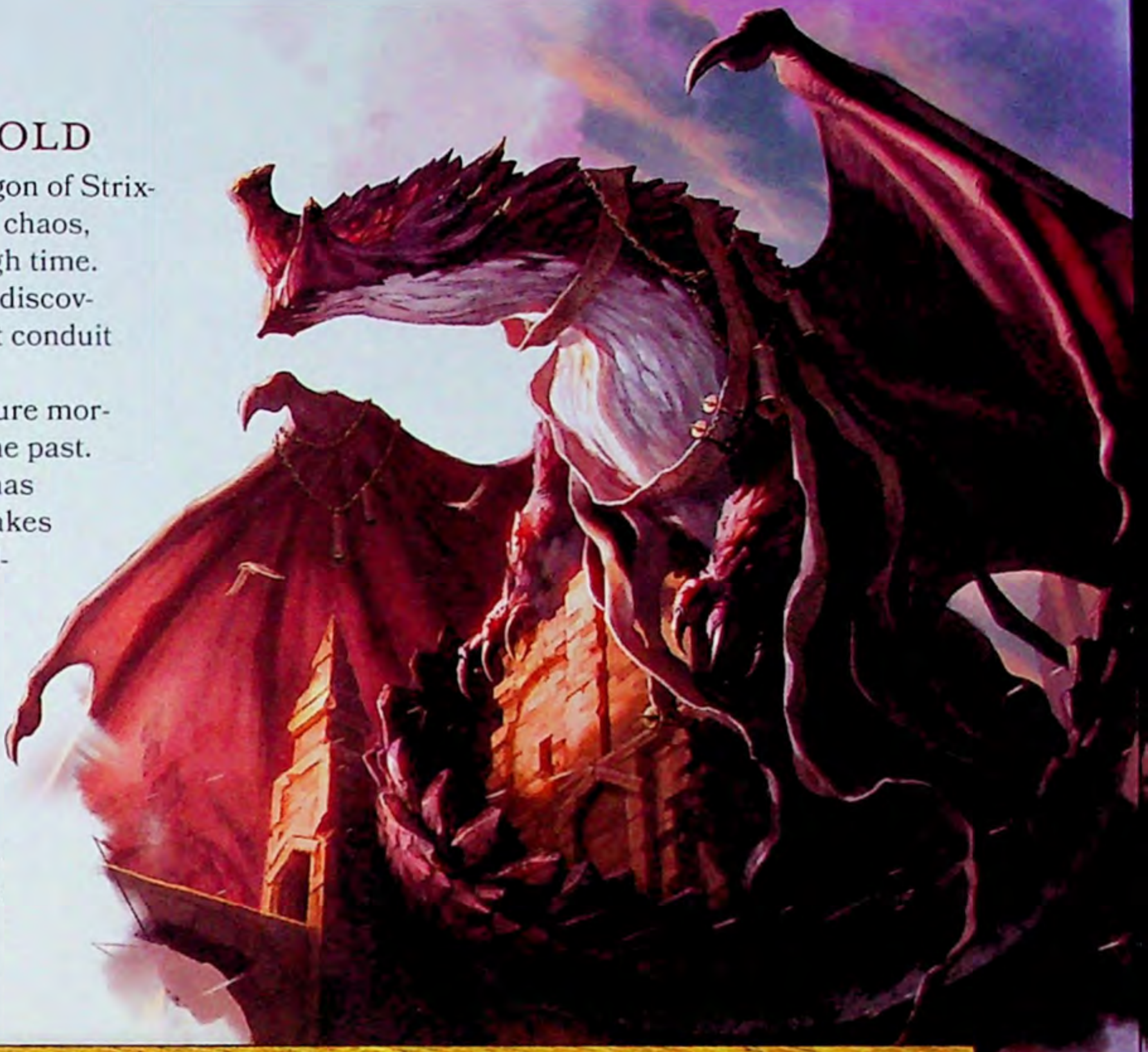
RAYMOND SWANLAND

VELOMACHUS LOREHOLD

Velomachus Lorehold was the first dragon of Strixhaven to master the magic of order and chaos, the flow and prediction of events through time. Her magic encourages exploration and discovery through the lens of creating a direct conduit to the past.

She founded Lorehold College to ensure mortals would never forget the lessons of the past. After living for centuries, Velomachus has grown tired of watching the same mistakes repeated continually. She hopes her college's teachings will foster the skills to either predict future pitfalls by taking lessons from those that came before or create flexible mindsets that allow people to shift their plans effectively when the unexpected occurs.

Velomachus's spells, legendary actions, and breath weapon are accompanied by visual effects resembling tomes and scrolls composed of golden light, perceptible distortions as time doubles back on itself, and thunderous sounds.



RAYMOND SWANLAND

VELOMACHUS LOREHOLD

Gargantuan Dragon (Wizard), Lawful Neutral

Armor Class 21 (natural armor)
Hit Points 487 (25d20 + 225)
Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	14 (+2)	29 (+9)	30 (+10)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)

Saving Throws Dex +10, Con +17, Wis +13, Cha +12
Skills Arcana +18, History +18, Investigation +18, Perception +13
Damage Immunities thunder
Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 23
Languages all
Challenge 25 (75,000 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +8

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Velomachus fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Velomachus makes one Bite attack and two Claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +18 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (1d10 + 10) piercing damage plus 6 (1d12) thunder damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +18 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (1d6 + 10) slashing damage. If the target is a Huge or smaller creature, it is knocked prone.

Battle Tide Breath (Recharge 5–6). Velomachus exhales thunderous sound in a 90-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 25 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 45 (7d12) force damage and 45 (7d12) thunder damage and is pushed up to 20 feet in a horizontal direction of Velomachus' choice. On a success, the creature takes half as much damage and isn't pushed. Objects that aren't being worn or carried take the damage and are pushed as if they were creatures that failed the saving throw.

Spellcasting. Velomachus casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Intelligence as the spellcasting ability:

1/day each: *contact other plane* (as an action, contacting a long-dead spirit), *divination*, *move earth*, *wall of force*

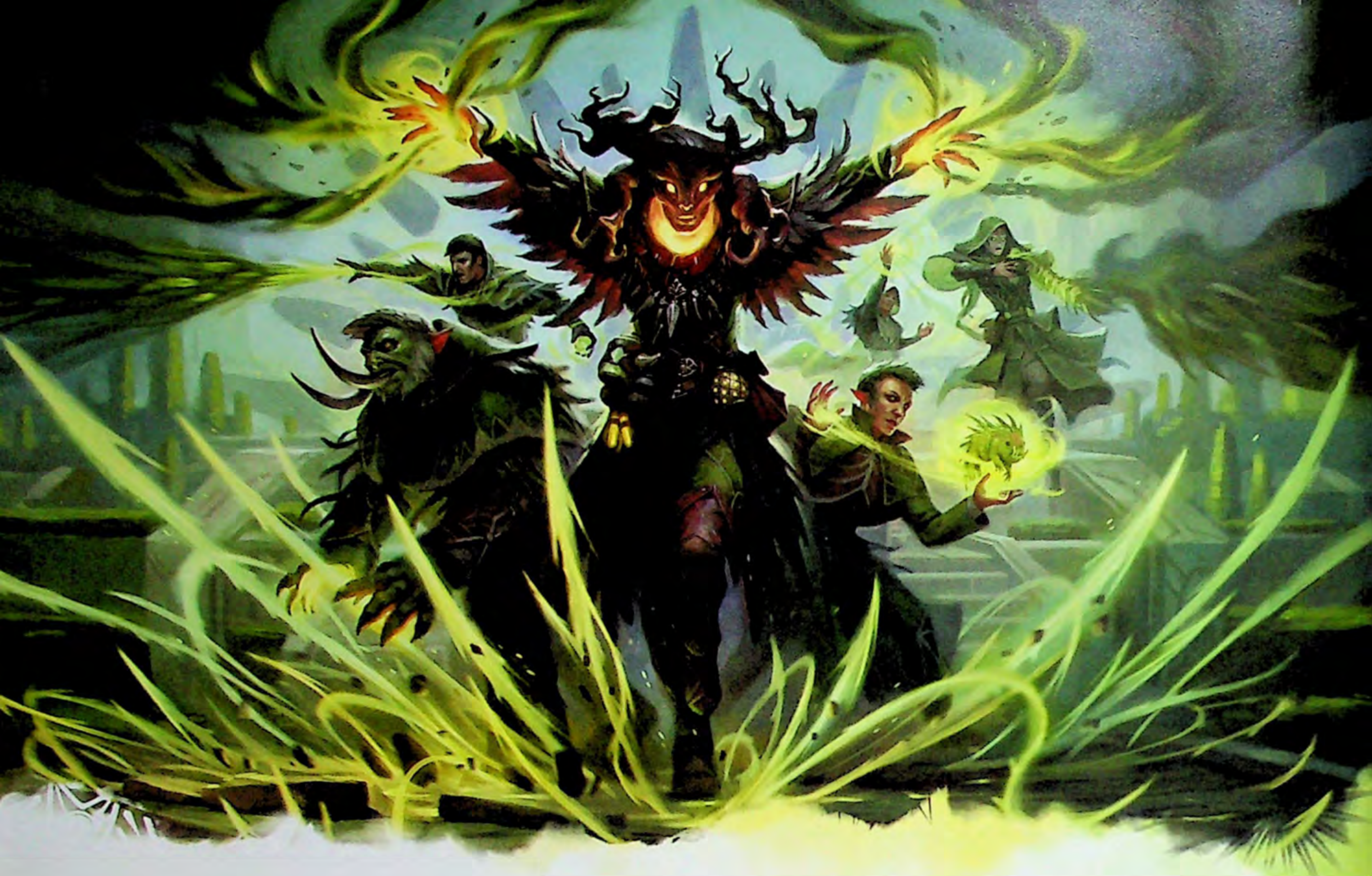
LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Velomachus can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Velomachus regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

Claw. Velomachus makes one Claw attack.

Chaotic Flow (Costs 2 Actions). Velomachus moves up to half her flying speed. If a creature hits or misses her with an opportunity attack during this move, the attacker takes 19 (3d12) thunder damage.

Repeating History (Costs 3 Actions). Velomachus magically summons 1d4 **spirit statue mascots** (in this chapter) in unoccupied spaces she can see within 60 feet of herself. The spirit statues obey her commands and take their turns immediately after hers. Any creature, other than a spirit statue or Velomachus, is restrained if it starts its turn within 5 feet of one or more of these spirit statues. This restrained condition lasts until the end of the creature's turn. These spirit statues disappear after 10 minutes, when Velomachus dies, or when she uses this action again.


DMITRY BURMAK

WITHERBLOOM SCHOLARS

Witherbloom College studies the magic inherent in the natural cycle of life and death. Witherbloom professors approach the philosophy from different directions, with one methodology focusing on decay and the other dealing with growth.

WITHERBLOOM STUDENTS

Deep in the fog and muck of the swamp, the students of Witherbloom College—first as apprentices and then as pledgemages—study the cycle of life and death. Their magic is fueled by what they call life essence: the ubiquitous energy that runs through living things.

Witherbloom students learn how to concoct magical potions and talismans, in addition to their spellcasting studies. Their magic ranges from necrotic shadows and withering bursts of poison to flourishing bursts of plant life.

WITHERBLOOM PROF. OF DECAY

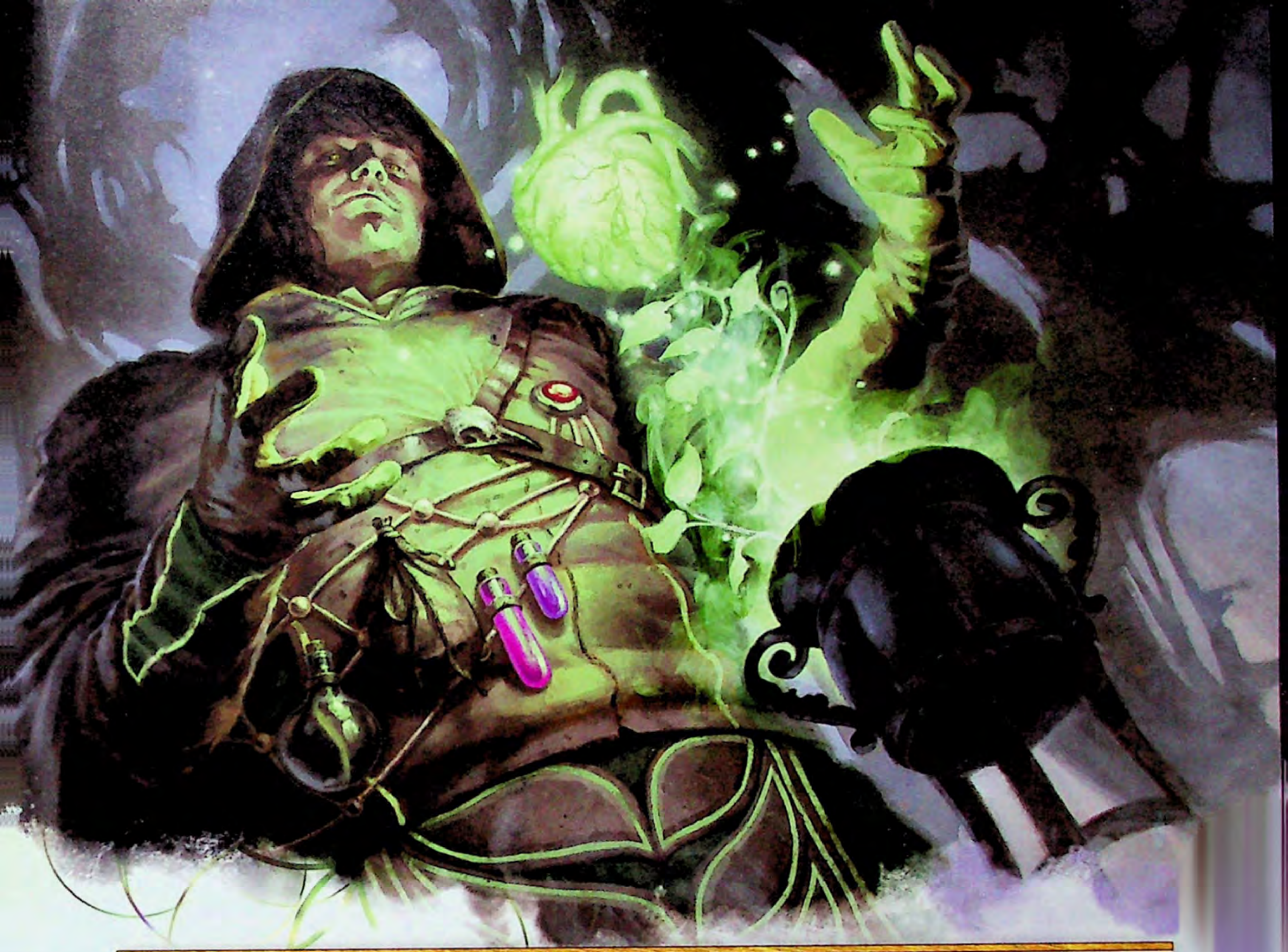
Professors of decay wield magic that drains and twists the essence of the professors' subjects. The professors use the gathered essence to feed their magic, snuffing the life and decaying the bodies of the living, entreating and commanding the dead and Undead, and twisting curses around their foes. In battle, they steal the essence of their enemies to heal their own wounds and create spears of sickly green life-draining energy.

Witherbloom teachers who espouse the decaying side of the natural cycle instruct their students to exploit the essence of life for their own needs. Professors of decay unravel the mysteries of death and the transition of decay, and they teach that any life's end is an asset waiting to be tapped.

WITHERBLOOM PROF. OF GROWTH

Professors of growth nurture the essence of nature through their magic. They brew infusions of plants, fungi, and insects or other minuscule creatures that thrum with the essence of life, using these infusions to fuel their magic instead of using traditional material components. In battle, they flood their allies with vital essence, healing wounds and soothing ailments. Their foes face the wrath of nature itself, from grasping plants and conjured poisonous vines to avatars of nature's wrath.

These professors teach their students to focus on the growth side of the natural cycle of life and death and to avoid wasting resources. They espouse the philosophy that a thriving system benefits all.



WITHERBLOOM APPRENTICE

Medium or Small Humanoid (Druid), Any Alignment

Armor Class 13 (leather armor)
Hit Points 44 (8d8 + 8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +3, Wis +4
Skills Medicine +4, Nature +5, Perception +6
Senses passive Perception 16
Languages Common plus any two languages
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Regeneration. The apprentice regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn if it has at least 1 hit point.

Verdant Talisman. At the end of a 10-minute ritual, the apprentice can touch one willing creature (including itself) and bestow upon it a small talisman imbued with magic. Upon receiving the talisman, the creature gains 10 temporary hit points, and it can add 1d6 to its initiative rolls while it wears the talisman. These benefits last for 1 hour or until the apprentice conducts another ritual to bestow another talisman. When the benefits expire, the talisman crumbles to dust.

ACTIONS

Briar Vine. *Melee Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage plus 9 (2d8) poison damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, the apprentice can pull it up to 10 feet closer to itself.

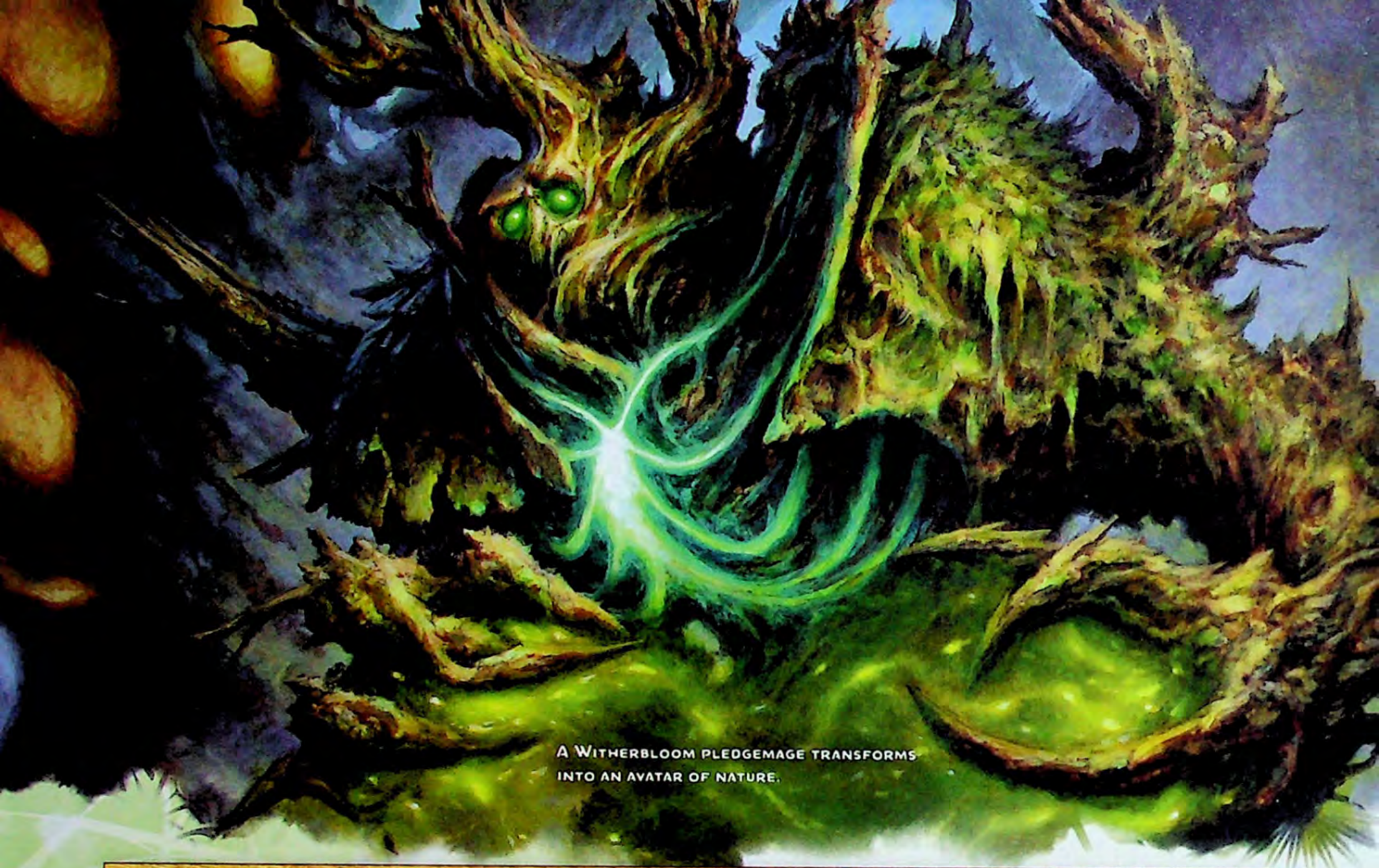
Spellcasting. The apprentice casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability:

At will: *druidcraft, spare the dying*
1/day: *pass without trace*

REACTIONS

Wither Burst. When the apprentice sees a creature within 30 feet of itself drop to 0 hit points, the apprentice channels the expended life essence and targets another creature it can see within 30 feet of itself. The target must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned in this way, the target takes 3 (1d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. The target can repeat the save at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

JOSH HASS



A Witherbloom pledgemage transforms into an avatar of nature.

Witherbloom Pledgemage

Medium or Small Humanoid (Druid), Any Alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with Vociferous Form)
Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)

Saving Throws Con +3, Wis +5
Skills Medicine +5, Nature +6, Perception +7
Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses passive Perception 17
Languages Common plus any two languages
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +2

Regeneration. As long as the pledgemage has at least 1 hit point remaining, the pledgemage regains 5 hit points at the start of its turn.

Verdant Talisman. At the end of a 10-minute ritual, the pledgemage can touch one willing creature (including itself) and bestow upon it a small talisman imbued with vitality magic. Upon receiving the talisman, the creature gains 10 temporary hit points, and it can add 1d6 to its initiative rolls while it wears the talisman. These benefits last for 1 hour or until the pledgemage conducts another ritual to bestow another talisman. When the benefits expire, the talisman crumbles to dust.

Actions

Briar Vine. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 + 3) piercing damage plus 18 (4d8) poison damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, the apprentice can pull it up to 10 feet closer to itself.

Spellcasting. The pledgemage casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability:

At will: *druidcraft, spare the dying*
1/day each: *death ward, pass without trace, speak with plants*

Bonus Actions

Vociferous Form (1/Day). The pledgemage transforms into an avatar of plants and shadow. While in this form, the pledgemage adds its Wisdom modifier to its AC if it isn't wearing armor or wielding a shield, and it has advantage on attack rolls against any creature missing hit points. This form lasts for 1 minute or until the pledgemage is reduced to 0 hit points.

Reactions

Wither Burst. When the pledgemage sees a creature within 30 feet of itself drop to 0 hit points, the pledgemage channels the expended life essence and targets another creature it can see within 30 feet of itself. The target must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned in this way, the target takes 3 (1d6) poison damage at the start of each of its turns. The target can repeat the save at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

FILIP BURBURAN

WITHERBLOOM PROF. OF DECAY

Medium or Small Humanoid (Druid), Any Alignment

Armor Class 14 (hide armor)
Hit Points 105 (14d8 + 42)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +6, Int +6, Wis +7, Cha +4
Skills Arcana +6, Medicine +7, Nature +6, Survival +7
Damage Resistances necrotic
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common plus any four languages
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

Essence Transfer (1/Day). The professor can cast the *animate dead* spell, using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The professor makes two Mortality Spear attacks. It can replace one of the attacks with a use of Spellcasting.

Mortality Spear. *Melee or Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8 + 4) necrotic damage, and the target can't regain hit points until the start of the professor's next turn.

Essence Pulse (Recharge 5–6). The professor creates a life-draining vortex in a 30-foot-radius sphere centered on itself. Each creature of the professor's choice that it can see within that area must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 23 (5d8) necrotic damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The professor then regains 10 hit points. An affected creature's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the necrotic damage taken. This reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest. The creature dies if its hit point maximum is reduced to 0.

Spellcasting. The professor casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability (spell save DC 15):

At will: *druidcraft, spare the dying*
1/day each: *antilife shell, bane, feign death, speak with dead*

WITHERBLOOM PROF. OF GROWTH

Medium or Small Humanoid (Druid), Any Alignment

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)
Hit Points 112 (15d8 + 45)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+3)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	13 (+1)

Saving Throws Con +6, Int +6, Wis +7, Cha +4
Skills Arcana +6, Medicine +7, Nature +6, Survival +7
Damage Resistances poison
Condition Immunities poisoned
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Common plus any four languages
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus** +3

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The professor makes two Verdant Lash attacks.

Verdant Lash. *Melee Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 30 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) poison damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be pulled up to 10 feet closer to the professor.

Spellcasting. The professor casts one of the following spells, requiring no material components and using Wisdom as the spellcasting ability:

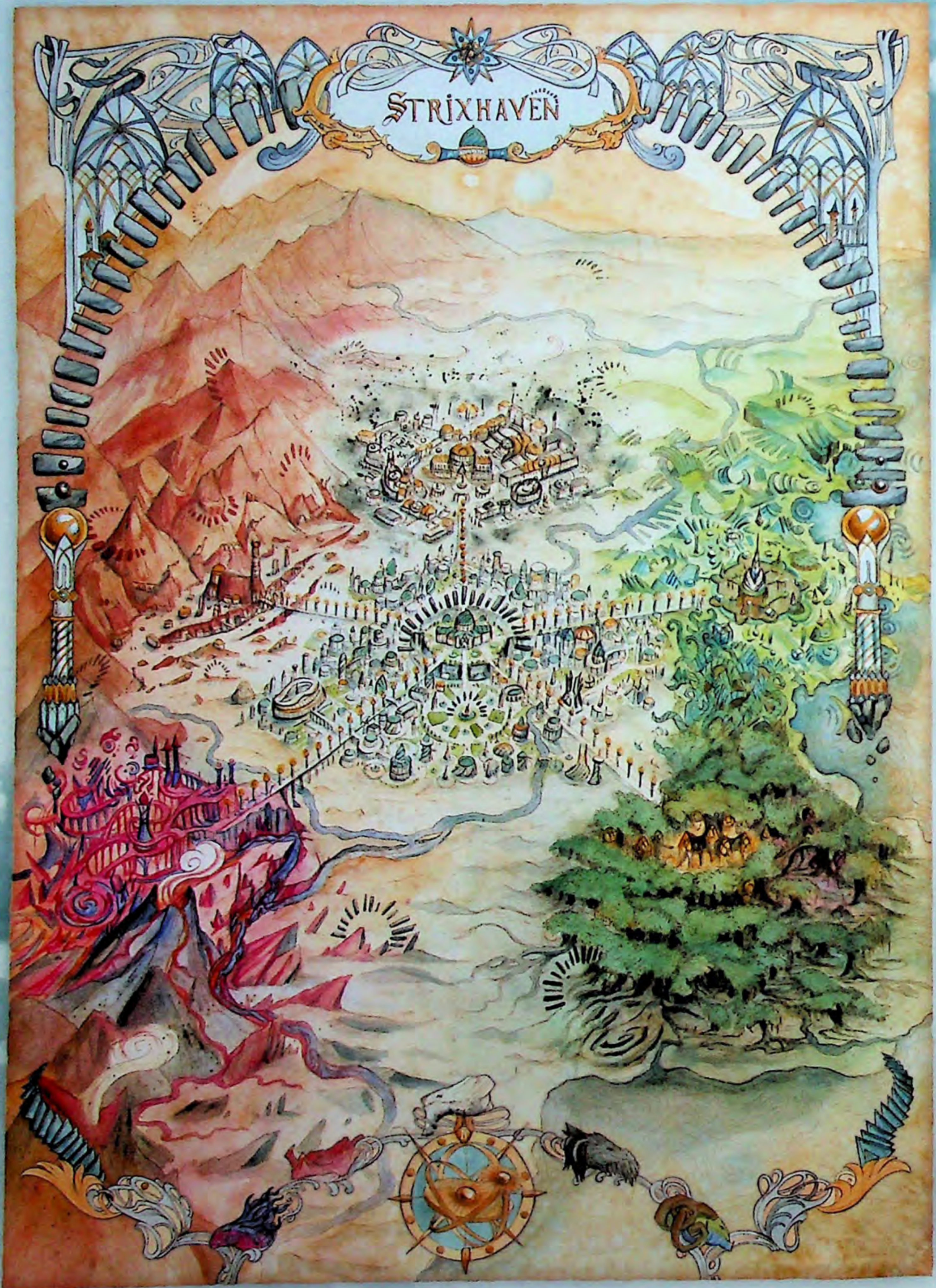
At will: *druidcraft, spare the dying*
1/day each: *greater restoration, lesser restoration, mass cure wounds, pass without trace, plant growth, revivify*

Summon Nature's Avatar (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). The professor magically summons a **groff** (in this chapter). The groff appears in an unoccupied space within 60 feet of the professor, acts as the professor's ally, and takes its turns immediately after the professor's. The professor can communicate telepathically with this groff while it remains. The groff remains for 10 minutes, until it or the professor dies, or until the professor dismisses it as an action.

ADAM PAQUETTE

APPENDIX

CAMPUS MAP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